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Cha: James.

TWO LETTERS

ON THE

CONDUCT

OF OUR

DOMESTICK PARTIES, &c.

[Entered at Stationers Hall.]

CM

TWO LETTERS

ON THE

CONDUCT

OF OUR

DOMESTICK PARTIES,

WITH REGARD TO

FRENCH POLITICKS;

INCLUDING

"OBSERVATIONS ON THE CONDUCT OF THE MINORITY, IN THE SESSION OF M.DCC.XCIII."

BY THE LATE

RIGHT HON. EDMUND BURKE.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR F. AND C. RIVINGTON,
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ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD;
SOLD ALSO BY J. HATCHARD, PICCADILLY.

1797.

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1898.

PREFACE.

THE general ſcope of the following publication has been already intimated in the Preface to a former collection of poſthumous Tracts by the ſame illuſtrious author. It carries forward the ſeries of Mr. Burke's opinions relative to our domeſtick parties, from the "Appeal to the old Whigs" in 1791, which is contained in the quarto edition of his works, to the Letter which he publiſhed in 1796, on occaſion of the attack made upon him by the Duke of Bedford.

The principal piece, indeed, (in magnitude certainly, though perhaps not in temporary intereſt, the principal) is not altogether new.

The

The " Obſervations on the Conduct of the Minority in the Seſſion of 1793," were ſurreptitiouſly printed at the beginning of the preſent year; but, as it uſually happens with ſuch frauds, in a very mangled ſtate, under a falſe title, and without the real letter to the Duke of Portland, which ſhould have been prefixed.

The paper itſelf was of the moſt private kind. It was not intended to come at any time, and under any circumſtances, to the view of the publick. Mr. Burke wrote it as his juſtification to the two noble heads of his party, for ſeeming to take (he did not in reality take) a different ſide from them, when he acted on their own principles with more prompt and vigorous deciſion, than they believed their duty at that time required them to do. He was ſenſible, that in its ſtyle, it was not wholly free from the influence of reſentment, though ſuch as he deliberately believed to be juſt. He knew that the ſharpneſs of his firſt impreſſions was viſible on it;

it; but he knew alſo to whom it was to be confided. He was to be judged by two of the moſt candid minds which the earth ever bore; men, who through the whole courſe of his political life, had given him indubitable proofs of an unbounded affection, truſt, and veneration. Nor was the paper to be ſeen by them till "a moment of compulſory reflexion," when it could not operate to the injury of any man, and would find in their boſoms ſomething congenial with his feelings, when he wrote it. Clearly foreſeeing that the diſſimilarity of their views muſt ultimately force them to a ſeparation from Mr. Fox, he depoſited it with the elder of his noble friends, deſiring that it might not be opened till after that event. Of this confidential Memorial he never had a ſecond copy made; but he did keep a copy of the Letter which accompanied it to the Duke of Portland, as a ſhort ſummary, containing all the principle and general ſentiment, without the neceſſarily invidious details, of his other more ſolemn Proteſt.

About

About two years after, he caſually learned from a friend, that the rough draft of the "Obſervations" ſtill exiſted in the hands of the perſon whom he had employed to tranſcribe it. He immediately expreſſed the greateſt anxiety to get it back. It was accordingly ſurrendered, with an aſſurance that no copy of it had been taken, and was immediately deſtroyed. A copy however, has ſince been publiſhed in the manner above related, by the very perſon who gave that aſſurance.

What Mr. Burke felt on receiving intelligence of the injury thus done him by one, from whom his kindneſs deſerved a very different return, will be beſt conveyed in his own words. The following is an extract of a Letter to a Friend, which he dictated on this ſubject from a ſick-bed: the reſt of the Letter entirely relates to a law-ſuit which he was then carrying on to obtain redreſs againſt another kindred fraud.

Bath,

Bath, 15th Feb. 1797.

" MY DEAR ********,

" ON the appearance of the Advertiſement, " all Newſpapers, and all letters have been kept " back from me till this time. Mrs. Burke " opened yours, and finding that all the mea- " ſures in the power of Dr. King, yourſelf, and " Mr. Woodford, had been taken to ſuppreſs " the publication, ſhe ventured to deliver me " the letters of to-day, which were read to me " in my bed, about two o'clock.

" This affair does vex me; but I am not in " a ſtate of health at preſent to be deeply vexed " at any thing. Wherever this matter comes " into diſcuſſion, I authoriſe you to contradict " the infamous reports, which (I am informed) " have been given out; that this paper had " been circulated through the Miniſtry, and " was intended gradually to ſlide into the preſs. " To the beſt of my recollection, I never had

" a clean copy of it but one, which is now in
" my poſſeſſion; I never communicated that,
" but to the Duke of Portland, from whom I
" had it back again. But the Duke will ſet
" this matter to rights, if in reality there were
" two copies and he has one. I never ſhewed
" it, as they know, to any one of the Miniſtry.
" If the Duke has really a copy, I believe his
" and mine are the only ones that exiſt, except
" what was taken by fraud from looſe and in-
" correct papers by S****, to whom I gave the
" letter to copy. As ſoon as I began to ſuſpect
" him capable of any ſuch ſcandalous breach of
" truſt, you know with what anxiety I got the
" looſe papers out of his hands, not having
" reaſon to think that he kept any other.
" Neither do I believe in fact (unleſs he medi-
" tated this villainy long ago) that he did, or
" does now poſſeſs any clean copy. I never
" communicated that paper to any out of the
" very ſmall circle of thoſe private friends,
" from whom I concealed nothing.

" But

" But I beg you and my friends to be cautious
" how you let it be underſtood, that I diſclaim
" any thing but the mere act and intention of
" publication. I do not retract any one of the
" ſentiments contained in that Memorial, which
" was and is my juſtification, addreſſed to the
" friends, for whoſe uſe alone I intended it.
" Had I deſigned it for the publick, I ſhould
" have been more exact and full. It was written
" in a tone of indignation, in conſequence of
" the reſolutions of the Whig Club, which
" were directly pointed againſt myſelf and
" others, and occaſioned our ſeceſſion from that
" Club; which is the laſt act of my life that I
" ſhall under any circumſtances repent. Many
" temperaments and explanations there would
" have been, if ever I had a notion that it
" ſhould meet the publick eye."

The moral ſenſe of mankind on this occaſion, ran along with the authority of the Law, in endeavouring to defeat the mercenary ſpecu-

lations of ſo aggravated a fraud; yet not leſs than three thouſand copies of the pamphlet are ſuppoſed to have been ſold in the three kingdoms. It was reprinted both in Scotland and Ireland, retailed and commented upon in Newſpapers, noticed in Reviews, and quoted in the Houſe of Commons, as Mr. Burke's. The very injunction which iſſued againſt it from the Court of Chancery, authenticated it. Mr. Burke himſelf, whenever he was aſked, as he frequently was at Bath, conſtantly gave in ſubſtance the explanation which is contained in the foregoing letter. In this account, indeed, there was one trifling miſtake. The ſingle fair copy, which he had received back from the Duke of Portland, was not in his own poſſeſſion: it was, where it ſtill remains, in the hands of his other noble friend, to whom it was jointly addreſſed. Probably he afterwards recollected the circumſtance, as, at his leiſure, he corrected, with his own hand, one of the printed copies. But no eſſential change of any kind could

now be made. The miſchief which had been done in a ſingle day, by the diſhoneſty of one man, was irreparable.

. . . . . .

Had it been poſſible to have let the paper ſleep in total ſilence, the friends of the author might have heſitated to give a genuine edition. But no man in the leaſt acquainted with the literary hiſtory of this century, or even of our own times, could, for a moment, entertain any ſuch hope. After the lapſe of years, ſometimes inquiſitive malice, ſometimes officious zeal, in this inſtance the cold pedantry of poring curioſity, in that caſe the imaginary triumph of diſcovering ſome hidden value in things which others had paſſed over with neglect, have brought again to light productions, which had dropped without a name from the preſs, which had never excited general attention, and which the mature judgment of the writers had wiſhed for ever to abandon. How then could it be ſuppoſed, that a tract, avowed to be Mr. Burke's

at the period of his proudeſt eminence, which had circulated ſo widely, and in itſelf abounded with hiſtorical matter, would not be received, with all its imperfections on its head, into future collections of his works? Nothing remained, therefore, but to publiſh it in a leſs mutilated form; to reſtore the true title, which had been malignantly falſified; and to add the introductory letter, which, if it had originally been given, might have repreſſed ſome of the murmurs diſtinguiſhable in the half-ſtifled cry, that was beginning to riſe on the appearance of the ſpurious edition.

The ſecond piece in this publication, though it has never hitherto been in print, was written with a view to the preſs. It was occaſioned by a ſpeech of a noble Duke, on the 8th of May, 1795, in the debate on the recall of Lord Fitzwilliam. It is in the epiſtolary form, and is addreſſed to a gentleman, of whom Mr. Burke always juſtly entertained a very

high opinion, and whoſe merit has ſince recommended him, honourably for himſelf, and beneficially, it is hoped, for the ſervice of the empire, to an important ſituation in the ſiſter kingdom. From an anſwer of the moſt flowing gaiety to the attack which had been made upon him, he paſſes to the exultations of the republican faction over him, on account of the King of Pruſſia's defection from the common cauſe, whom he treats himſelf with ſevere pleaſantry and dignified ridicule. He then proceeds more ſeriouſly to complain of the difficulties impoſed by governments and the higher orders of ſociety on all who diſintereſtedly ſtruggle to ſupport, defend, and ſave them amidſt the perils of the preſent criſis: he exhibits a beautiful picture of the ſtate of Europe the day before the revolution in France: in a ſublime ſtrain of morality, he developes the pure and exalted motives of his own actions; and avows his deſpair of our ſafety from either of the two great parties, which domineer in the councils, and divide the opinions, of the nation.

tion. Nothing, perhaps, that ever came from his pen, would have placed him perſonally in a more elevated point of view; but his own individual glory was ever the leaſt of his cares. The ſpeech, which gave riſe to it, having been ſoon forgotten, this letter was ſuppreſſed. And it may not be impertinent to remark, that the ſame had nearly been the fate of the eloquent performance, which he publiſhed the following year, on a ſimilar provocation from the Duke of Bedford. He had determined to have forty copies only taken for his own uſe, and the preſs broken up; when Lord Lauderdale, by a notice in the Houſe of Peers, revived the ſubject of the grants, which his Sovereign had been graciouſly pleaſed to confer upon Mr. Burke, in reward of his long, laborious, and ſplendid ſervices.

His rupture with the Minority, which, till the ſeſſion of 1793, was never conſidered on his part as final and irreconcileable, drew down upon

upon him much obloquy and reproach. He was loudly charged with a dereliction of all his publick principles, with infidelity to his party, and with a violation of private friendſhip. On the other hand, for the diſſatisfaction which he early intimated, and which he began from 1795 more decidedly to entertain, at the meaſures of Government, he has not eſcaped the imputation of ingratitude. Theſe are heavy accuſations; though all do not preſs with equal weight upon his memory. It is the firſt praiſe of moral wiſdom to know the juſt time and place of each reſpective virtue. The beſt motives of human actions may loſe not only their proper grace, but their very nature; they may become crimes, if they are not ſuch as are ſuited to the occaſion. Happily for the infirmity of our kind in moſt caſes the choice is ſimple; it is between poſitive right and poſitive wrong. There are ſituations, however (and the preſent is a ſeaſon full of them) which make it neceſſary for us to diſtinguiſh more nicely; which leave us only an alternative

of difficulties between evil and evil, and a painful choice among conflicting virtues. In free ſtates, the union of publick men in a common cauſe cannot be too much reſpected and cherished; for without the combined efforts of many, who think alike of the commonwealth, the pureſt and beſt publick principles can ſeldom, if ever, prevail. We ſhould endeavour to ſtrengthen publick connexion by private friendſhip; for without the coheſion of that attraction, without the charm of that endearment which winds itſelf round the heart, the bond of party would be found, ſometimes a looſe and weak, ſometimes a fretting and galling tie. Neither is it to be doubted that we owe a liberal attachment and ſupport, to the power of thoſe from whom we have conſented to accept benefits, and by whom, on the ſureſt evidence of our own experience, if we mean not to confeſs ourſelves utterly unworthy, we muſt believe that power to be well and laudably exerciſed. To gratitude, to friendſhip, to party, we ought cheerfully to yield

every

every inferior opinion on every collateral and ſubordinate queſtion: within thoſe limits they have lawful dominion: but to require that to them we ſhould ſurrender our deliberate judgement, and ſettled conviction on a ſyſtem of fundamental policy, which involves the leading intereſts, the ſafety, or the honour of our country, what is it, but in the name of virtue to preach up conſpiracy and corruption? All the other ſocial charities are ſwallowed up and loſt in the comprehenſive relation of our country. For her they exiſt; by her we are protected in the enjoyment of them; to her they ought, on grave and conſcientious reaſons, to be ſacrificed. Her danger may call upon us to do what touches us ſtill more nearly. It may be our duty to review, perhaps to remodel, our very principles. New and unforeſeen circumſtances may teach us the errour of concluſions which were formed with ſufficient accuracy for general application to ordinary times. Conſiſtency, however, is the firſt and ſtrongeſt preſumption both of integrity

and wiſdom. Sudden and great changes in the ſyſtem of thinking and acting, ſhake the character of the man to the foundation. He who has broken with all his publick and private friends, may have been uniformly right. He is at iſſue with them on equal terms, before his country, the world, and poſterity. There is only their authority againſt his, and authority is not eſtimated by mere numbers. But he who is avowedly inconſiſtent, puts himſelf at once on his defence, and ſets out with an admiſſion againſt himſelf.

Mr. Burke ſo felt it. "Strip him of his "conſiſtency," ſaid he, ſpeaking of himſelf in his Appeal, "and you leave him naked indeed." It was to the charge on that particular head, that he more diſtinctly applied his anſwer; yet profeſſing to adduce only ſome few, among many, of his former declarations, which he thought in uniſon with his view of the French Revolution The perfect, and perhaps ſingular, conſiſtency of his character, can only be fully

fully known, when the publick ſhall have before them the documents of his moſt ſecret motives and confidential counſels; which, during a very important epoch, from the year 1766 to the end of the American war, have been fortunately diſcovered more entire, than his friends had dared to hope. For the preſent, it will be ſufficient to give a ſlight outline of ſome paſſages in his political life, and of his early principles, as introductory to the particular occaſions of the pieces which are compriſed in this publication. This will incidentally afford ſome teſt of all the charges.

Nine and twenty years of an exiſtence, not prolonged to a very advanced age, he devoted with unremitting zeal to the ſervice of his country. During all that period, he never acted but with one party, which he always believed to be, in all its ſuperiour members, the pureſt that our hiſtory can ſhew. When he came a new man among them, he at once proved himſelf worthy of their confidence. He declined taking

any

any ſalary for his employment under Lord Rockingham, as Secretary to the firſt Lord of the Treaſury; and, at his own coſt, he obtained a ſeat in parliament to defend their meaſures. Chance firſt led him to that connexion; but when it was ſoon after diſſolved, he entered into it a ſecond time from choice, even againſt the affectionate remonſtrances of ſome of the leaders in it, who preſſed him to follow without regard to them, the eaſy path, which his great reputation had already opened before him to power and fortune.

The ſacrifices which he made to that connexion, are little known. He never boaſted of them, nor voluntarily ſuffered any friend of his to blazon them. He regarded them but as ordinary acts of duty. Indeed, though not inſenſible to ſober and judicious praiſe, he was ſo abhorrent from that artificial fame, which is made and unmade at pleaſure in our popular journals, that he ſhunned the moſt diſtant appearance

pearance of being gratified by it, with ſcrupulous ſolicitude. He reſtrained all, over whom he had any influence, even from refuting the abſurd calumnies, of which he was perpetually the object. His old maſter, companion, and friend (for he was all theſe) did not go without a reprimand from him for revealing, with ſome degree of innocent pride, the real place of his education, in contradiction to the ſilly tale of his having been bred in France. He was daily vilified as an obſcure and needy adventurer, yet he did not tell, what he had in his hands the means of ſubſtantiating, that he was ſprung from a family anciently ennobled in ſeveral of its branches, and poſſeſſing an ample eſtate, which his grandfather had actually enjoyed; nor that he had himſelf ſunk a handſome competency in his adherence to his party. Once, and but once, in debate, he was provoked to declare his private circumſtances. It was in anſwer to a coarſe aggreſſion. He ſaid, that by the death of a brother, whom he loved and lamented, he had ſucceeded to upwards of £.20,000; part of

which

which he had ſpent, and the reſt then remained to be ſpent in the independent ſupport of his principles. In truth, without a ſingle perſonal extravagance, he did ſpend that, and conſiderably more, of his own, chiefly derived from a ſource, which Cicero eſteemed the moſt honourable to himſelf, the laſt remembrances of dying friendſhip. This was not, on his part, a ſpeculation from which he had formed hopes that deceived him. He repeatedly proclaimed to the world, that he knew the road which he had taken, was not the way to preferment.

The advantages which offered themſelves, he was not eager to improve, when he might with unſullied honour. Early in his oppoſition to Lord North, the ruling Directors of the Eaſt-India Company, wiſhing to ſtop a popular cry, and to take from Government the beſt plea for intermeddling in their affairs, propoſed to ſend Mr. Burke, on his own terms, at the head of a commiſſion to reform the abuſes of the Eaſt. Some of the correſpondence on this occaſion is

ſtill extant. He reſolved not to go, actually refuſed the appointment, and then, not before, acquainted Lord Rockingham with his determination. At ſeveral ſubſequent junctures he might readily have commanded, in other arrangements, much higher ſituations than he ever held, or expected to hold, with his own party. The only office which he ever did hold, he took with the intention of reforming. Under the old Conſtitution of that office every Paymaſter-General was neceſſarily, for a time, "the defaulter of unaccounted millions." He could not be admitted, however ready, to make up his accounts, till thoſe of all his predeceſſors had been cloſed; and he was obliged to have in his hands large advances, to anſwer the drafts of the inferior paymaſters. Mr. Burke, from the circumſtances of the period when he came into his office, had he kept it on its old footing, might have been rich in the publick money. He might, with certainty and ſafety, have realized (and it was actually ſuggeſted to him, how he might fairly realize) more than the value,

many times told, of all the grants which he ultimately received from the Royal Bounty. But by a law, of which he was the author, and which has ſince been imitated in the payment of the navy, he changed the mode of the office, and, when he reſigned it, cloſed his accounts.

On ſome of the occaſions above related, he reſiſted the temptations, not of avarice only, but of ambition; a paſſion much more difficult for a ſtateſman to ſubdue. How exempt he was from the latter vice, he ſtill more clearly ſhewed in another inſtance. From what he thought his duty, and for the general good of his party, he declined a ſtation, which he might have been moſt expected to covet: on the death of Mr. Dowdeſwell, he was preſſed to become the leader of his friends in the Houſe of Commons, but he would not conſent. It was his ſyſtematick opinion, that before any man ſhould aſpire ſo high, he ought to have caſt his root more broadly, and driven it more deeply, than he had himſelf then done,

done, into the ſoil of the country. Poſterity may lament his virtuous delicacy.

Mr. Fox, at that period, generally voted on the ſame ſide, but was not yet directly connected with the party of Lord Rockingham. He had, from his childhood, been acquainted with Mr. Burke; and, from his entrance into Parliament, had cultivated a cloſe intimacy with him, even while, for years, he was one of his moſt formidable antagoniſts in publick debate. Their friendſhip was, of courſe, encreaſed by acting together in oppoſition; though in that ſituation for years, Mr. Fox kept himſelf open for any other political engagement, and was not conſidered as actually a member of the ſame party with his friend. Mr. Burke never urged him to become ſo. He fairly repreſented to him, as he conſtantly did to others, that he had little hope of ſucceſs. He never gave any man advice to act contrary to his intereſts, but ſtating thoſe for the conſideration of the perſon himſelf, he

laid before him all the facts and the principles on which he might form his own deciſion. In this manner he certainly did prepare the mind of Mr. Fox to join the party, and the minds of the party to receive Mr. Fox, and place him at their head; an event, in which, when it happened, no man more ſincerely rejoiced.

The principles on which Mr. Burke ſupported the party wherein he ſpent his life, are not left to be collected from detached ſentences in his various productions, or caſual phraſes dropped in debate, and ill preſerved by memories, on which, if even the intentions of the reporters were always upright, little reliance could be placed in a queſtion of any delicacy. They were early recorded by himſelf at large, and in a body. He found the Whig party under Lord Rockingham, when they were compelled to ſet up a methodized oppoſition, to be, indeed, men of ſentiments eminently good and juſt: yet what they felt rightly, they had not deduced ſyſtema-

tically. They were new to their ſituation. It was neceſſary, however, in erecting their ſtandard, to publiſh their declaration to their country. The taſk of preparing it, was undertaken by Mr. Burke; and, in 1770, executed by him, in a pamphlet called, "Thoughts on the "Cauſes of the preſent Diſcontents." The materials of it were collected from various converſations with all the leading members of the party; and before it was ſent abroad into the world, the particular and diſtinct approbation of each was obtained. From this he ſhould be judged, if he is to be fairly tried for inconſiſtency. But, among all his works, the pamphlet of 1770 has been leaſt quoted, if at all. It certainly does not contain any tenets of democracy. The clear object of the whole is to recommend, as the beſt practical government for this country, an open ariſtocracy of rank, property, virtue and talents, acting in concert together, on a known and avowed ſyſtem of opinions, agreeable to the exiſting conſtitution of

the

the kingdom, acquiring by their principles and conduct the publick confidence of the people, and, in all thoſe titles claiming the publick confidence of the Sovereign.

None of his writings on the French Revolution were ever purſued with a more violent cry than was that pamphlet, by the Republicans of the day. But they were then of little comparative ſtrength in numbers or influence. By one writer, his book was called, "an impoſi-"tion on the publick," and "a ſcheme, cal-"culated to perpetuate our diſtreſſes;" he was "the organ of a diſcontented faction," and "the maſk of patriotiſm dropped while he was "writing." Another "wondered at the cor-"ruptneſs of his heart, and the deception of "his head;" and, in language ſimilar to that of the writer juſt quoted, deſcribed the pamphlet as deſigned "to guard againſt the poſſible "conſequence of an effectual reformation in the "vitiated parts of our conſtitution and govern-"ment."

" ment." What ſort of reform it was, to which Mr. Burke, on that occaſion, was ſuppoſed to be an enemy, may be collected from the great principle which is laid down by this adverſary, in the ſpirit, and almoſt in the very words, of the Revolutioniſts in France. It is ſaid, that " the modes of government which " have ever been impoſed on credulous man, " have been not only deficient in producing the " juſt ends of government, viz. the full and " impartial ſecurity of the rights of nature; " but alſo have been rather formidable and " dangerous cabals againſt the peace, happineſs " and dignity of ſociety. In tracing the origin " of all governments, (it is added a little lower down) " we find them either the produce of " lawleſs power, or accident, acted on by cor- " rupt intereſt. The ſame circumſtance that " attends the formation of governments, attends " what is called their reformation: and of this " the hiſtory of our own country affords a " melancholy example." Mr. Paine's two parts,

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of the Rights of Man are but a paraphraſe of theſe texts.

Mr. Burke and his friends at that time, never denied that it was their purpoſe to reſiſt with all their might the "effectual reformations" there ſuggeſted, and to ſupport the "melancholy example" afforded by the *ſettlement* of our own revolution in the laſt century. They always gloried in the accuſation. To convict ſuch of them as yet remain, before any impartial tribunal, on a charge of inconſiſtency, in not depreciating that example, and not admiring thoſe effectual reformations now, will require more than declamation for argument, and mutilated fragments for evidence againſt them. Indeed an author who is by no means deficient in ſeverity againſt Mr. Burke, but who appears to be well read in his works, drawing a parallel between his conduct and that of Mr. Fox, has very juſtly and candidly acquitted Mr. Burke from this charge. He repreſents the "Thoughts on the cauſes of the

the preſent diſcontents" as a Creed of Ariſtocracy; and the fault which he finds with the framer of that creed is not that he had ſwerved from it, but that he "had neglected the progreſs of the hu-"man mind, ſubſequent to its adoption."

The principles, however, which led Mr. Burke to condemn the French Revolution, are to be traced to a much more diſtant date, and long before he became a publick man. They are to be diſcerned in his firſt acknowledged production, the "Vindication of natural ſociety." This was an ironical expoſure of Lord Bolinbroke's falſe philoſophy. His cauſe of quarrel was the miſchievous tendency of the principles inſinuated by that lively but diſingenuous writer, who, in his opinion "ſapped the foundation of "every virtue, and all government, while he "attacked every mode of religion." The followers of that ſchool were then chiefly if not wholly confined to the higher claſſes, and he wiſhed to warn them in time of the dangers

which they incurred, and which, in other Countries have ſince actually fallen upon them, from the uſe that might be made of their own arms in the hands of others. His deſign, as he himſelf explained it, was "to ſhew that without the "exertion of any conſiderable forces, the ſame "engines which were employed for the deſtruc-"tion of religion, might be employed with "equal ſucceſs for the ſubverſion of Govern-"ment; and that ſpecious arguments might be "uſed againſt thoſe things, which they who "doubted of every thing elſe, would (at that "period) never permit to be queſtioned." Accordingly the vindication of natural ſociety conſiſts wholly in touching with vivacity on a number of common-place topicks from the abuſes incident to, or rather from the evils ſuffered under, all the ſeveral forms of political ſociety, with an intimation that our own mixed conſtitution could no more ſtand this teſt, than the ſimple forms. Copying the accuſtomed fallacy of the noble author, whom he perſonated, he declined

clined giving any ſyſtem of his own, well aware as he was even then, how much more eaſy it was in the ſcheme of that philoſophy, to demoliſh, than to rebuild. He urged theſe ſophiſtries then as too futile to be taken for any thing but ridicule; yet they have ſince been gravely produced as wonderful diſcoveries. He thought them ſufficient to ſtartle the diſciples of Lord Bolingbroke in that day; but, the French, who profeſs to have taken that noble philoſopher as one of their maſters, have gone the whole length in a deſperate experiment on a great kingdom; and Mr. Burke, in his laſt labours, was only waging with more ſerious vigour the ſame war, in which, with lighter weapons, he made the firſt eſſay of his juvenile ſtrength. Nor is it poſſible to paſs over without notice in the preface, which diſcloſes the real intention of that tract, a beautiful ſtrain of the ſame pious humility which characterized his wiſdom to the laſt moment of his life. He expreſſes himſelf ſatisfied that "a mind "which has no reſtraint from a ſenſe of its own

" weakneſs, of its ſubordinate rank in the cre-
" ation, and of the extreme danger of letting the
" imagination looſe upon ſome ſubjects, may
" very plauſibly attack every thing the moſt ex-
" cellent and venerable." " Even in matters
" (adds he) which are, as it were, juſt within our
" reach, what would become of the world, if
" the practice of all moral duties, and the foun-
" dations of ſociety reſted upon having their
" reaſons made clear and demonſtrative to every
" individual?"

This fixed perſuaſion of his youth, as to the pernicious effects of the new philoſophy, was many years after confirmed, when he was at Paris not long before the acceſſion of Louis the XVIth. He was courted and careſſed, as a man of eminence, by the literary cabal which was then preparing the way for the overthrow of Altars and Thrones. They daily beſet him, and communicated to him enough to let a mind ſo obſervant, as his, into all their ſecrets. From that time he,

always

adopted those impressions, which made him foresee, in their first rudiments, the hideous consequences of the doctrines propagated, and the measures pursued, by the pretended National Assembly of France. Not long after his return from Paris, he took occasion in the House of Commons to testify those impressions. In a speech, of which no satisfactory report was ever given, but which was taken in short-hand, and of which a copy remains corrected by himself, he pointed out the conspiracy of Atheism to the watchful jealousy of Governments. He professed that he was not over-fond of calling in the aid of the secular arm to suppress doctrines and opinions; but if ever it was to be raised, it should be against those enemies of their kind, who would take from us the noblest prerogative of our nature, that of being a religious animal. "*Already* (continued he) *under the systematick* "*attacks of those men, I see many of the props of* "*good government beginning to fail; I see propa-*"*gated principles which will not leave to religion*

With a mind thus long before prepared, he could not be slow in forming his notions of the French Revolution. Nevertheless he sought information from every quarter, as if the subject had been wholly new to him. He desired all persons of his acquaintance who were going to Paris, (and curiosity attracted many) to bring him whatever they could collect of the greatest circulation, both on the one side and the other. He had also many correspondents, not only among the English and Americans residing there, but also among the natives, to whom, as well as to other foreigners, he had always done the honours of this country, as far as his means would permit him, with liberal hospitality.

Among

Among others, he received letters endeavouring to trick out the events of the Revolution in the moſt gaudy colouring, from Mr. Paine, Mr. Chriſtie, and Baron Cloots, afterwards better known by the name of Anacharſis. It was in anſwer to a letter of this kind, from a French Gentleman, that he wrote his celebrated "Reflexions."

While he was employed upon that work, in the beginning of the year 1790, the praiſe beſtowed by Mr. Fox on the behaviour of the French Guards, in taking part with the populace, firſt induced him to deliver his ſentiments on that ſubject in the Houſe of Commons. The circumſtances of that debate, and the noble deportment of Mr. Fox, who profeſſed himſelf to have learned more from Mr. Burke than from all men and all books put together, and who, after having heard his friend's ſpeech, declared that there was, there could be, no difference in their principles, however they might differ in their application

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of the ſame principles, cannot but be too well remembered to need repetition. In conſequence of what then paſſed, the "Reflexions" were conſiderably enlarged from the firſt ſketch of them, and ſtill further additions were ſucceſſively made, as the plot of the conſpirators in France daily more and more unfolded itſelf in all it's parts. The book was publiſhed in the following Autumn; and Mr. Burke had the ſatisfaction of receiving explicit teſtimonies of concurrence and applauſe from the principal members of the party, with whom he had begun his political career.

Having given this ſolemn warning to his country, and to Europe, he in no way brought the ſubject again before the publick, till Mr. Fox and Mr. Sheridan the next year, in three ſucceſſive debates, introduced the praiſes of the French Revolution. On the laſt of theſe occaſions, Mr. Burke immediately roſe to anſwer Mr. Fox, but was prevented (it was then three

in

in the morning) by a loud cry for the queſtion. He afterwards took the firſt opportunity, which he thought regular, and moſt favourable to his ſituation, unſupported as he was, to attempt a diſcuſſion of the principle. He was, however, repeatedly interrupted. The debate, at length, was forced into a perſonal contention between him and Mr. Fox. The ſcene, altogether, was of the moſt afflicting kind.

Having found himſelf on that night alone, oppoſed to a hoſt of enemies, he conſidered himſelf as abſolved from every obligation of party. He made his appeal, as he called it, from the New to the Old Whigs; from the declamations of his contemporaries in debate, to the recorded doctrines of the great actors in our Revolution, affirmed by both Houſes of Parliament, on an important trial projected and proſecuted to that very end. He knew, indeed, that many of thoſe whom he had left, entertained in their hearts the ſame ſentiments with

 himſelf,

himſelf, but till they ſhould have publickly and explicitly avowed themſelves, ſo that he could conſiſtently and honourably act with them, he regarded himſelf as a mere individual member of Parliament, conſcientiouſly purſuing what the diſcipline of his early ſtudies, the obſervation of his more mature years, and his recent examination of the event ſo long anticipated by him, had firmly perſuaded him to be right. He did not ſeek to engage himſelf with any other party. It was not till ſome months after, that he firſt ſaw Mr. Pitt in private ſociety, ſince the latter had been placed at the head of adminiſtration.

Towards the cloſe of the year 1791, a private friend of Mr. Burke's, connected with Miniſtry, firſt made him acquainted with the reſidence of Mr. Adair at the Court of St. Peterſburgh, and with the circumſtance of a letter having been intercepted from that Gentleman to Mr. Fox, which was repreſented to be of a very criminal complexion. The whole proceeding was in it's

very eſſence contrary to Mr. Burke's notions of propriety and duty. He manifeſted this in his own conduct. When his ſon went to Coblentz in that very Summer, he thought it neceſſary to obtain the approbation of Government. When, too, about the ſame time, the Empreſs of Ruſſia had written him a very gracious letter on ſome of his publications, and he had prepared an anſwer, intended to confirm that Sovereign in the warm intereſt which ſhe then appeared to take, in what he thought the common cauſe of Europe, he conceived himſelf bound to communicate it to Miniſters. He did ſo; and in conſequence of ſome doubts which they entertained (juſt doubts, as ſubſequent events have ſhewn) he conſented to ſuppreſs it. With theſe ſentiments, he was ſincerely diſtreſſed at the intelligence which he received reſpecting Mr. Adair; the more ſo, as it was intimated to him, that ſome ſerious meaſures were in contemplation on that ſubject. Mr. Fox himſelf afterwards told him that he did expect ſome motion of that deſcription to be

brought before the Houſe. Mr. Burke, in conſequence, purpoſely abſented himſelf from the debate, unable to defend, and unwilling to join in accuſing, a man for whom he ſtill cheriſhed the memory of paſt friendſhip. The ſubject in truth was never agitated. He had therefore no opportunity of checking the account which he had received. But when the ſpurious edition of his private Memorial to the Duke of Portland came forth, he watched the publick prints with ſome attention, looking for an explanation which was promiſed. Had any been given, which might have ſatisfied his mind, it is believed, that he meant to have corrected any errour of fact. On the principle of his cenſure he was not to be ſhaken.

The formation of the Society, calling itſelf the Friends of the People, on the one ſide, and the King's Proclamation againſt ſeditious writings on the other, brought Mr. Burke, in 1792, once more into contact with ſome of his old friends,

friends, by whom the former meaſure was condemned, and the latter ſupported. After the retreat of the King of Pruſſia out of France, thinking that the ſtate of this country, and of Europe, demanded the united efforts of all publick men, he made an attempt again to collect around him ſuch of them as ſaw in the ſame light with himſelf, the danger which menaced the whole ſocial and moral order of the world. In one of theſe conſultations he expreſſed the warmeſt regard for Mr. Fox, his regret for the difference between them, and his eager deſire that all conſideration of himſelf ſhould be laid aſide, if Mr. Fox could be won to the true intereſts and ſervice of his Country. He ſaid, that "if an objection perſonal to himſelf could poſ-"ſibly lurk in the heart of any one, which "might make him ſtand in the way of ſuch a "broad and extenſive ſettlement, as that alarm-"ing Criſis demanded, beſides freely abandon-"ing any pretenſions of his own, he was ready "to go out of the kingdom, and to render

"himſelf

"himſelf a voluntary exile." The earneſt manner in which he uttered this effuſion, was felt and is ſtill remembered by thoſe who were preſent; and they who beſt knew him, are ſatisfied, that he would have executed, if neceſſary, what he then propoſed. At the ſame period too, and indeed at all times in all his occaſional intercourſe with Miniſters, he laboured nothing more than to diſpoſe them, in whatever arrangement they might project for ſtrengthening Government, above all things to include Mr. Fox. With him, it was Mr. Burke's opinion, that the ſafety of Europe might have been reaſonably hoped; without him, that it ought to be attempted. But Mr. Fox perſiſted in the courſe on which he had already entered; and the great body of thoſe who diſſented from him, could not at once bring themſelves to break through their long habits of confidence in him, ſo as to act ſteadily againſt his counſels.

At the opening of the next Seſſion of Parliament, the Miniſter had vacated his ſeat. From his

his abſence the ſpirit and vigour of oppoſition ſeemed to riſe; and on the ſide of Government there was more room and more neceſſity for individuals to ſtand forward in the conteſt. Under theſe circumſtances, Mr. Burke was the principal perſon, to whoſe ſentiments the nation looked on the queſtions of that day. In the firſt debate he employed towards Mr. Fox a tone of friendly remonſtrance, unmixed with any thing of aſperity. Afterwards, in one of the paſſages of the Houſe of Commons, he accidentally met Mr. Fox, who, taking him by the hand, told him "that he would do more in that way, than in any other." But on the two following days the purport of Mr. Fox's repeated motions, and the vehemence of his manner (which is impetuous even where there is nothing violent in the matter) made it impracticable, as Mr. Burke ſaid, to preſerve a ſimilar ſtyle of conciliation. He was conſcious that he kindled, as on the other ſide the diſcuſſions grew more and more enflamed, or produced a more intenſe ſenſation from the

continued

continued action of the ſame heat. His feelings on the occaſion will be ſeen in his "Obſervations" on the proceedings of that Seſſion. From that moment he ſaw, and he ſaw with pain, that the die was caſt for ever.

Mr. Burke was by no means ſingular in receiving the impreſſion, which he did, from the conduct of Mr. Fox. The current of popular opinion ſet ſtrongly againſt the latter. He ſoon became ſenſible, that his conſtituents in general diſapproved what he had done, and that even among thoſe, whoſe partiality to him was moſt conſpicuous, there were many, who, when he was attacked on that ſcore, profeſſed themſelves neither able nor willing to defend him. In conſequence he felt himſelf obliged not only to ſign a loyal aſſociation of his own pariſh, contrary to his own avowed opinion, as Mr. Burke has remarked, but alſo to explain his principles and meaſures in a printed letter to his conſtituents.

This

This publication was ſoon taken up by the moſt zealous ſupporters of Mr. Fox, in the Whig Club; a ſociety which had been founded chiefly with a view to embody, ſtrengthen, and extend his perſonal intereſt in Weſtminſter, though not wholly without regard alſo to the general principles and the political ſucceſs of the party to which he belonged. At the monthly meeting of February, a vote of thanks to him for his late conduct was moved, but withdrawn at his own deſire. He did not conceal that as many of his friends, whom he moſt reſpected, were known to differ in ſentiments from him, ſuch a vote muſt inevitably tend to diſunion, and that it was in itſelf unneceſſary, as even his enemies did not charge him with bad motives. His diſcretion, however, on this occaſion, as in ſome other memorable inſtances, was unable to controul the zeal of thoſe, who call themſelves his Friends, and who avowing his elevation to Power to be the firſt aim of all their politicks, ſeem always to treat him as incapable of chuſing

for himſelf, or as ſpeaking a language of management foreign to the heart. They doubt either his judgment or his ſincerity. They think, that they can do him no greater ſervice than by plunging, where they truſt that in any event he will follow, becauſe he cannot deſert thoſe, who profeſs to ſacrifice every thing for him. In this ſpirit, notwithſtanding his diſſuaſion of the ſtep, as both unneceſſary and miſchievous, on the very ſame day a requiſition was made, and the next day advertiſed in the publick papers, for the holding of an extraordinary meeting; the purpoſe of which was to conſider of voting the approbation and thanks of the Club to Mr. Fox, for the principles and arguments of his letter to his conſtituents.

The prudent part even of thoſe who agreed with Mr. Fox, looked forward to the motion with alarm. It was not their inclination, it was not their policy, to precipitate a breach. They would be left in the hands of thoſe, whom they had

had already found themſelves unable to govern; and the ſeparation of others, in whoſe publick virtue and integrity ſober-minded men moſt confided, would give their enemies a deciſive advantage over them, eſpecially in what they knew to be a moment of unpopularity. The authority of thoſe, who ſhould ſecede, would of courſe be wreſted into evidence againſt thoſe who ſhould remain, and would be uſed to lend a colour to the worſt conſtructions of their motives. They could not ſtop what they dreaded; they tried, therefore, to negociate a compromiſe. They brought ſome of the more violent to ſomething of apparent moderation. On the other ſide, they urged all the conſiderations which they profeſſed to have determined themſelves; and they put it to the friendſhip, to the juſtice, to the candour of thoſe whom they addreſſed, whether they could, directly or indirectly, ſanction what were called the calumnies malevolently ſpread againſt a man, to whom all declared a warm affection. The two noble

chiefs of the party, who were convinced, with Mr. Burke, how much depended on gaining Mr. Fox to the common cauſe of all eſtabliſhed order, but who had not yet, with Mr. Burke, deſpaired of gaining him, conſented at laſt to acquieſce ſilently in ſome general contradiction of the aſſerted calumnies. Accordingly, when the day of the meeting came, as the underſtood price of their continuance in the ſociety, (they were not then preſent) a new motion was ſubſtituted for that which had been advertiſed. But it was exactly what every attempt at comprehending oppoſite ſentiments muſt ever be, vague, looſe, ambiguous, admitting any future interpretation. It did not at all aſcertain, as it ſhould have done, what were the miſrepreſentations, and by whom employed, which were ſo very injurious to Mr. Fox, as to make this declaration neceſſary now, which he himſelf ſo ſhort a time before had pronounced and ſhewn to be unneceſſary. In propoſing the amended reſolve, the chairman, Lord William

liam Ruſſell, ſpoke of it as virtually the ſame with that which it had ſuperſeded, and only intended to ſupply what was there thought deficient, by adding a diſapprobation of the calumnies propagated againſt Mr. Fox to the approbation of his principles and arguments. Of courſe it paſſed unanimouſly. Mr. Burke has abbreviated it, but at full length it ran; "That "the Whig Club think it their duty, at this "extraordinary juncture, to aſſure the Right "Hon. Charles James Fox, that, all the arts of "miſrepreſentation, which have been ſo induſ-"triouſly uſed of late, for the purpoſe of "calumniating him, have had no other effect "upon them, than that of confirming, ſtrengthe-"ning, and encreaſing their attachment to "him."

When this reſolution was made publick, many gentlemen quitted the club, for which they ſtated their reaſons in a letter ſigned by all of them but one. They expreſſed great perſonal reſpect

for

for Mr. Fox, but, combining all the circumſtances, they could not conſtrue the vote otherwiſe than as approving, without qualification, what had been done by Mr. Fox in that ſeſſion: they did not agree in that approval, and they could not come to the concluſion, that their attachment to him was encreaſed. Mr. Burke was in the number of the ſeceders, but had no concern in drawing up the letter. The firſt movers of the whole buſineſs congratulated themſelves upon the event as upon a victory. It was trumpeted about by the runners of the party as a deciſion (though in reality it was nothing leſs than a deciſion) of Mr. Burke's two noble friends againſt his opinions; and his ſpeeches in Parliament were plainly enough intimated to have been the miſrepreſentations by which Mr. Fox was ſuppoſed to have been calumniated.

The ſeceſſion gave riſe for a ſhort time to the appearance of a third party, with which Mr. Burke might have acted in full conformity with

all

all his principles; he might have placed himſelf at the head of it; and, had he been an intereſted or an ambitious man, he might eaſily have ſtepped from that eminence into a ſtation, which good men wiſhed to ſee him fill, and which his enemies, for the purpoſe of maligning his motives, more than once falſely reported that he actually had accepted. But he ſtill kept aloof from every new connexion. He contented himſelf with drawing up at the intervals, which his occupation in the impeachment of Mr. Haſtings afforded him, thoſe Obſervations, which he afterwards ſent to the Duke of Portland, on the conduct of the Minority in that Seſſion. This he thought neceſſary from the proceedings of the Whig Club, and ſtill more from the ſubſequent conſtruction put upon them. His motives and his objects in writing this paper are affectingly ſtated in the letter, which accompanied it to his Noble Friend,

Having

Having thus lodged his "Teſtamentary Proteſt," he waited with ſome impatience for his diſmiſſion from publick life. For ſome time paſt, nothing had detained him in Parliament, but the ſacred duty, which he felt, of ſtruggling to the laſt for the coercion and puniſhment of what he moſt unfeignedly and ſtedfaſtly believed to be the flagrant enormities of the Eaſt, the cold-blooded tyranny of avarice, which oppreſſed millions of the innocent natives, and the baneful corruptions, which ſpreading thence, threatened to infect and poiſon the whole body of this realm. Having no perſonal inducement whatever (bold as have been the falſehoods to the contrary) he had never ſought that Herculean labour. When the Select Committee, of which he was ſo efficient a Member, and in which all that followed had its origin, was firſt appointed in the adminiſtration of Lord North, it is well known to many, that he very reluctantly, and not without much importunity of his friends, accepted the honour of being put on the liſt for the ballot.

He too well foreſaw how obſtinate and perilous a combat he was to wage. One of his reaſons for refuſing ſo long before the commiſſion to reform abuſes in Bengal, had been a ſuſpicion that the Company did not ſincerely deſire any radical reform. He had ſeen a faction of their ſervants, for years, baffle a Majority of the Directors ſupported by the Miniſter Lord North; and he was not ignorant how much every year had added to the ſtrength of that faction. But from the moment that he undertook the enquiry, he determined that nothing ſhould divert him from carrying it, as far as it depended upon him, to its proper and legitimate concluſion. While a publick clamour was raiſed about the delay of the impeachment, and he was reproached as the cauſe of it, he was in reality diſcharging an irkſome truſt, that alone retarded the execution of all the plans, to which he had long looked for the repoſe and comfort of his declining age. At length, having finiſhed his taſk towards the cloſe of the Seſſion in 1794, he received the thanks

of the Houſe for his management of their Proſecution.

At the ſame time his exertions in the only other publick buſineſs, to which he had for a long time paſt attended, obtained the ſanction of both Houſes of Parliament. The plot for the overthrow of our Conſtitution, on which he had given the firſt alarm, had now gained ſo much head, as to force itſelf on the attention of the Legiſlature. A Secret Committee of the Lords and another of the Commons ſeverally made reports, on which the moſt ſerious proceedings were afterwards grounded. Men of ingenious minds and practiſed ſkill in the arts of popular eloquence, may diſpute (and what will they not diſpute?) the preciſe extent of legal criminality, which may have attached to the actual conduct of the perſons then put on their trials for high treaſon; but no man of common apprehenſion and common honeſty can read the evidence there adduced, and ſay, that no plot at all of the nature

ture ſo often charged by Mr. Burke exiſted, and grew, and was ſpreading itſelf rapidly over the country.

The Debates on theſe Reports of the Secret Committee effected, at length, what the example and arguments of Mr. Burke had failed to accompliſh. The principles of the Oppoſition Party were brought to the teſt on a fundamental queſtion of domeſtick policy; and from that time the ſeparation between them and the Noble friends of Mr. Burke was complete. The latter ſoon after formed a junction with Adminiſtration; a meaſure, of which Mr. Burke has been erroneouſly ſuppoſed the author, but of which, in fact, he knew nothing, till it was actually ſettled; not, indeed, in all the particular details, but in the general outline.

In the midſt of the Negotiation Mr. Burke vacated his Seat. It was generally expected by the Nation, and even called for in a very hand-

ſome manner by ſome members of the Minority, that ſuch a publick proviſion ſhould be made for him as would afford eaſe and dignity to his retirement. Nor were Miniſters wanting in the conteſt of generoſity. They voluntarily acquainted ſome of his friends with their intentions of adviſing the King to beſtow upon him an affluent income, and the honour of the Peerage, not as a mark of favour in a new arrangement of power, but as a debt ſtrictly due to him from his country.

Every thing beyond what he had ever ſuffered himſelf to indulge to his deſires, ſeemed now to be within his reach, and he had only to enjoy the retreat which he had laid out in proſpect, on the ſame ſyſtem of moral duty that governed all the deliberate acts of his life, when his ſon, in whom every thing centered, and whom he had juſt ſeen elected into that aſſembly which he had himſelf ſo long delighted, inſtructed and adorned, was unexpectedly ſnatched from

from him for ever. From that day he thought only of preparing for his own departure with decency and in quiet, by ſatisfying all juſt demands upon him. He received, therefore, with gratitude, the munificence of his Sovereign, in the penſion which was ſettled on himſelf and Mrs. Burke ſoon after their common misfortune, accompanied with a gracious intimation, that ſtill more was intended. But, from the death of his ſon, (except, on his part, to withdraw his claims) no mention was made of the firſt and higheſt reward, which, for the ſake of that ſon alone, had ever been a tranſient object of his ambition. To the memory of the child whom he ſo tenderly loved, and who by his filial piety repaid, as by his other virtues and talents he juſtified that love, he has rendered an elegant tribute of affectionate praiſe in the Letter which he publiſhed on the Duke of Bedford's ſpeech; and in that, now firſt publiſhed on the ſpeech of another noble Duke, will be found two paſſages, perhaps ſtill more intereſting,

ing, becauſe more ſimple, when his ſorrow was more freſh.

His grief was undoubtedly ſtrong and deep; but it was never of that exceſſive kind which was weakly, perhaps wickedly reported. It never relaxed the vigour of his mind, whatever ſubject called upon him to exert it, nor the intereſt which he took, to the laſt moment, in the public weal.

"A country," (he ſaid, not many months before his death) "which has been dear to us "from our birth, ought to be dear to us from "our entrance *into* the ſtage, to our final exit "*from* the ſtage, upon which we have been "appointed to act." He found, however, as was natural, a ſuperiour pleaſure in thoſe ſubjects which were mingled up with the remembrance of his ſon. His attention, therefore, was particularly excited by the nomination of Earl Fitzwilliam to the government of Ireland; a Nobleman

a Nobleman with whom he had not only a long and cordial friendſhip, but under whoſe immediate auſpices his ſon was to have commenced his publick career; and who was going to a ſcene of action, in which that ſon had lately diſtinguiſhed himſelf as agent for the Roman Catholicks of that kingdom. His own ſentiments on the political expediency of granting relief to that great body, which, with the beſt diſpoſitions to Monarchy, and to the reigning Monarch, from whom they know the firſt mitigation of their condition to have directly come, contains more than three-fourths of the whole population of Ireland, are well known from ſeveral publications of his on that queſtion. He would have raiſed them finally, but, by due degrees, to the level of other Diſſenters from the eſtabliſhed Church, too many of whom are much leſs friendly to the Conſtitution of their Country.

The

The leading principle of Lord Fitzwilliam's adminiſtration was to convert that, which is now our weakneſs, into our moſt efficient ſtrength. He wiſhed to unite, as far as poſſible, the affections of all claſſes. The pride of the higher orders he would have flattered by cheriſhing among them what had moſt reſemblance of a country-party, in ſubordination to the enlarged intereſts of the Britiſh Empire; he would have ſubdued faction and conſpiracy by conciliating the great maſs of the people; and far from employing ſo large a part of our own natural force in defeating the attempts of domeſtick rebellion and foreign invaſion in that quarter, he would have made that iſland a place of arms, from whence, if the vigour of our counſels had riſen to meet the exigencies of our ſituation, we might have poured forth unexhauſted armies of a brave and loyal nation to the ſuccour of our beſt and moſt meritorious allies in France. The experiment was not fully tried; but, as far as it went, every appearance indicated ſucceſs. Thoſe publick

publick men, who certainly then enjoyed the greateſt ſhare of popular favour, ſtood forth in the ſupport of government and the war. Never was the parliament of that country ſo unanimous. Never were ſuch large ſupplies voted, and without a murmur. Never did a Governor receive ſuch incontrovertible proofs of publick love and veneration in the addreſſes of all ranks, all civil deſcriptions, all religious perſuaſions, even after that which in other caſes would have been called diſgrace. Into the immediate merits of his recall, as the queſtion was put, Mr. Burke would never enter. He conceived it of moſt importance, as a ſymptom and prognoſtick. He was inſtantly ſatisfied, though it happened many months before our firſt indirect ſolicitation for peace, that we were then preparing to abandon what he always maintained as the great object of the war. For he argued, if Miniſters had been earneſt in proſecuting the momentous cauſe, in which we were engaged, and had entertained a ſerious ſenſe of the encreaſing danger, that menaced every thing

valuable to us, they would not have aſked, whether the Lord Lieutenant had anticipated requeſts, by which he ſhould have waited to be importuned, or whether he had removed from their ſtations at one ſtroke two conſiderable officers of the Crown in whom he had no confidence, inſtead of diſplacing them ſeparately, and at intervals; they would only have enquired, whether the King's buſineſs had been done with zeal and effect? Had there been a cordial conſent of principles on both ſides the water, he was perſuaded, that ſome way or other would eaſily have been found to compromiſe all inferiour conſiderations. He did not diſſemble theſe opinions: on the contrary he ſpared no exertion, though in vain, to impreſs them on all the leading Members of Government in this Kingdom.

An enquiry into the cauſes of the Lord Lieutenant's ſudden recall was moved in both Houſes of Parliament here. In the Houſe of Lords, a Peer of the higheſt rank in urging the motion took

took occaſion to throw out ſome inſinuations againſt Mr. Burke, as having deſerted his ancient friends and principles, and as having written a book which amidſt much ſplendour of eloquence contained much pernicious doctrine, and had provoked on the other ſide a very miſchievous anſwer.

Mr. Burke was probably the more ready to notice this attack, becauſe the topicks were the ſame with thoſe, of which he had complained much in private, as having been unfairly introduced in ſome of the State-Trials. In one of them eſpecially, having been ſummoned as a witneſs ſoon after the loſs of his ſon, having much againſt his will been kept in hourly attendance for two whole days in the neighbourhood of the Court, and having then been diſcharged without examination, he was much ſurpriſed to learn afterwards, that a principal part of the defence had conſiſted in commenting upon various extracts from his works, and that, by a

learned perſon, who had never taken up any of the challenges, which he had himſelf repeatedly thrown out, where the truth might have been fully diſcuſſed face to face, in the Houſe of Commons. Perhaps too, there were ſome circumſtances of the time, which did not diſpoſe him in general to regard the Noble Duke's conduct in Parliament with much indulgence. All theſe may be traced in the pleaſant, though ſevere, chaſtiſement of the letter which forms the ſecond part of this publication. But it is chiefly worthy of attention, as it contains, in their very germ and ſeed, thoſe notions, which are unfolded and diſplayed in his later productions with ſo much luxuriant beauty. It is a maſterly drawing, from which he afterwards painted on a larger canvas his grand and ſtriking pictures of our awful ſituation, from what he thought the falſe policy of both our contending parties. As he would not ſurrender to his long friendſhip with Mr. Fox thoſe principles, which he had himſelf modelled for his party, and which he had

had unalterably fixed as his own canon long before that party had an exiſtence; ſo neither from a ſenſe of recent obligation to Mr. Pitt, would he accommodate them to the fluctuating chances of a campaign, or the accidental languor and laſſitude of a people, which, like every high-ſpirited people too long repreſſed, is only to be animated by a congenial character of deciſion, energy, and enterpriſe. Before the actual aggreſſion of the French he had ſaid; "it is "impoſſible to tell what will be the event of "any war: it is impoſſible to tell, how it will be "conducted either by miniſters or military men: "yet with all theſe dreadful uncertainties, I am "clear it muſt be riſked, or our ruin is no un-"certainty at all." In the courſe of our arduous conteſt, he ſaw no indication of any eſſential change in the diſpoſition and principles of the common enemy; the real danger againſt which we were driven, unwilling as we were, to ſeek ſafety in arms. He ſaw therefore no proſpect of a rationally ſecure peace, which is the only

only end of any juſtifiable war, in whatever cauſe undertaken. Till the calamities of war by the leſſons of that terrible neceſſity, which is the ſtern guardian of the moral and ſocial world, ſhall have taught the diſturbers and deſtroyers of Europe to look for their own happineſs in the truly pacifick mind, which reſpects the rights of others, all negociations and treaties appeared to him but ſnares to catch credulity, and ſcreens to conceal the ſhame of puſillanimity. With moſt of the dreadful uncertainties of war now become, in his opinion, afflicting certainties, he thought that we muſt perſevere. To the great talents of the Miniſter he bore invariable teſtimony, but he could never allow, that to humiliate and proſtrate a great nation at the feet of an inſolent and rancourous enemy, was the conduct of a ſtateſman, equal to the mighty criſis which ought to render us for ever worthy of our rank among the ſtates of Europe, or for ever glorious in our fall. He wiſhed them to be ſtimulated and urged on

to

to a more reſolute diſcharge of their high duty, by all of independent ſpirit and virtue, that can be found in the country; yet, at the ſame time, he wiſhed their continuance in power, becauſe in whatever hands the preſent alarming ſituation of the civilized world had found the government of the kingdom, to have arreſted it from them by force would have put all good government to the hazard, and becauſe they have no competitors for publick confidence on the grounds of our ancient, appropriate, local intereſts, in connexion with that ſyſtem on which the liberties, the tranquillity, and the proſperity of Europe have hitherto reſted. Theſe ſentiments did not leave him but with his breath. He teſtified them on the laſt day of his life, in the laſt converſation which he held, hardly an hour before his diſſolution. If with the expreſſion of them in his diſputes with the political friends of his earlier days, he ever mingled "any "thing of general human infirmity or his own "particular infirmity," as he ſaid with his accuſ-

tomed humility in the will, which he wrote with his own hand, almoſt over the dead body of his Son, and which he confirmed in the full and near contemplation of his own death, he has aſked their forgiveneſs. On the other ſide he had no forgiveneſs to aſk. To have ſuppoſed that, by the grants which his Sovereign was adviſed to confer upon him, the Miniſter meant to purchaſe his ſilence, would not only have been contrary to the kind and generous manner, in which they were ſignified to him; it would have been to incur the guilt of the blackeſt ingratitude by ſuppoſing, that under the colour of rewarding his ſervices to his country, they were inſidiouſly given to tarniſh and obſcure the luſtre of all his paſt life.

OBSER-

LETTER

TO THE

DUKE OF PORTLAND,

WITH

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

CONDUCT

OF THE

MINORITY,

PARTICULARLY IN THE

LAST SESSION OF PARLIAMENT,

1793.

TO

HIS GRACE

THE DUKE OF PORTLAND.

MY DEAR LORD,

THE Paper which I take the liberty of ſending to Your Grace, was, for the greater part, written during the laſt Seſſion. A few days after the prorogation ſome few obſervations were added. I was however reſolved to let it lie by me for a conſiderable time; that on viewing the matter at a proper diſtance, and when the ſharpneſs of recent impreſſions had been worn off, I might be better able to form a juſt eſtimate of the value of my firſt opinions.

I have juſt now read it over very coolly and deliberately. My lateſt judgment owns my firſt ſentiments and reaſonings, in their full force, with regard both to perſons and things.

During a period of four years, the ſtate of the world, except for ſome few and ſhort intervals, has filled me with a good deal of ſerious inquietude. I conſidered a general war againſt Jacobins and Jacobiniſm, as the only poſſible chance of ſaving Europe (and England as included in Europe) from a truly frightful Revolution. For this I have been cenſured, as receiving, through weakneſs, or of ſpreading, through fraud and artifice, a falſe alarm. Whatever others may think of the matter, that alarm, in my mind, is by no means quieted. The ſtate of affairs *abroad* is not ſo much mended, as to make me, for one, full of confidence. At *home*, I ſee no abatement whatſoever in the zeal of the Partiſans of Jacobiniſm towards their cauſe, nor any ceſſation in their efforts to do miſchief. What is doing by Lord Lauderdale on the firſt ſcene of Lord George Gordon's actions,

and

and in his ſpirit, is not calculated to remove my apprehenſions. They purſue their firſt object with as much eagerneſs as ever, but with more dexterity. Under the plauſible name of peace, by which they delude or are deluded, they would deliver us unarmed, and defenceleſs, to the confederation of Jacobins, whoſe center is indeed in France, but whoſe rays proceed in every direction throughout the world. I underſtand that Mr. Coke, of Norfolk, has been lately very buſy in ſpreading a diſſaffection to this War (which we carry on for our being) in the country in which his property gives him ſo great an influence. It is truly alarming to ſee ſo large a part of the ariſtocratick intereſt engaged in the cauſe of the new ſpecies of democracy, which is openly attacking, or ſecretly undermining, the ſyſtem of property by which mankind has hitherto been governed. But we are not to delude ourſelves. No man can be connected with a party, which profeſſes publickly to admire, or may be juſtly ſuſpected of ſecretly abetting, this French Revolution, who muſt not be drawn into its vortex, and become the inſtrument of its deſigns.

What

What I have written is in the manner of apology. I have given it that form, as being the moſt reſpectful; but I do not ſtand in need of any apology for my principles, my ſentiments, or my conduct. I wiſh the paper I lay before your Grace, to be conſidered as my moſt deliberate, ſolemn, and even Teſtamentary Proteſt; againſt the proceedings and doctrines which have hitherto produced ſo much miſchief in the world, and which will infallibly produce more, and poſſibly greater. It is my proteſt againſt the deluſion, by which ſome have been taught to look upon this Jacobin conteſt at home, as an ordinary party ſquabble about place or patronage; and to regard this Jacobin War abroad as a common War about trade or territorial boundaries, or about a political balance of power among rival or jealous ſtates: Above all, it is my proteſt againſt that miſtake or perverſion of ſentiment, by which they who agree with us in our principles, may on collateral conſiderations be regarded as enemies; and thoſe who, in this perilous criſis of all human affairs, differ from us fundamentally and practically, as our beſt friends. Thus perſons of great importance

may be made to turn the whole of their influence to the deſtruction of their principles.

I now make it my humble requeſt to your Grace, that you will not give any ſort of anſwer to the paper I ſend, or to this Letter, except barely to let me know that you have received them. I even wiſh that at preſent you may not read the paper which I tranſmit; lock it up in the drawer of your library table; and when a day of compulſory reflection comes, then be pleaſed to turn to it. Then remember that your Grace had a true friend, who had, comparatively with men of your deſcription, a very ſmall intereſt in oppoſing the modern ſyſtem of morality and policy; but who under every diſcouragement, was faithful to publick duty and to private friendſhip. I ſhall then probably be dead. I am ſure I do not wiſh to live to ſee ſuch things. But whilſt I do live, I ſhall purſue the ſame courſe; although my merits ſhould be taken for unpardonable faults, and as ſuch avenged, not only on myſelf, but on my poſterity.

Adieu,

Adieu, my dear Lord! and do me the juſtice to believe me ever, with moſt ſincere reſpect, veneration, and affectionate attachment,

Your Grace's

Moſt faithful friend,

and moſt obedient

humble ſervant,

BEACONSFIELD,
Sept. 29, 1793.

EDMUND BURKE.

OBSERVATIONS, &c.

APPROACHING towards the cloſe of a long period of publick ſervice, it is natural I ſhould be deſirous to ſtand well (I hope I do ſtand tolerably well) with that public, which, with whatever fortune, I have endeavoured faithfully and zealouſly, to ſerve.

I am alſo not a little anxious for ſome place in the eſtimation of the two perſons to whom I addreſs this paper. I have always acted with them, and with thoſe whom they repreſent. To my knowledge I have not deviated, no not in the minuteſt point, from their opinions and principles. Of late, without any alteration in their ſentiments, or in mine, a difference of a very unuſual nature, and which,

under the circumſtances, it is not eaſy to deſcribe, has ariſen between us.

In my journey with them through life, I met Mr. Fox in my road; and I travelled with him very chearfully as long as he appeared to me to purſue the ſame direction with thoſe in whoſe company I ſet out. In the latter ſtage of our progreſs, a new ſcheme of liberty and equality was produced in the world, which either dazzled his imagination, or was ſuited to ſome new walks of ambition, which were then opened to his view. The whole frame and faſhion of his politics appear to have ſuffered about that time a very material alteration. It is about three years ſince, in conſequence of that extraordinary change, that, after a pretty long preceding period of diſtance, coolneſs, and want of confidence, if not total alienation on his part, a compleat public ſeparation has been made between that gentleman and me. Until lately the breach between us appeared reparable. I truſted that time and reflexion, and a deciſive experience of the miſchiefs which have flowed from the proceedings and the ſyſtem of France, on which our difference had ariſen, as well as the known

known ſentiments of the beſt and wiſeſt of our common friends upon that ſubject, would have brought him to a ſafer way of thinking. Several of his friends ſaw no ſecurity for keeping things in a proper train after this excurſion of his, but in the reunion of the party on its old grounds, under the Duke of Portland: Mr. Fox, if he pleaſed, might have been comprehended in that ſyſtem, with the rank and conſideration to which his great talents entitle him, and indeed muſt ſecure to him in any party arrangement that *could* be made. The Duke of Portland knows how much I wiſhed for, and how earneſtly I laboured that re-union, and upon terms that might every way be honourable and advantageous to Mr. Fox.—His conduct in the laſt ſeſſion has extinguiſhed theſe hopes for ever.

Mr. Fox has lately publiſhed in print, a defence of his conduct. On taking into conſideration that defence, a ſociety of gentlemen, called the Whig Club, thought proper to come to the following reſolution—"That their confidence in Mr. Fox is confirmed, ſtrengthened, and increaſed, by the calumnies againſt him."

To that reſolution my two noble friends, the Duke of Portland and Lord Fitzwilliam, have given their concurrence.

The calumnies ſuppoſed in that reſolution, can be nothing elſe than the objections taken to Mr. Fox's conduct in this ſeſſion of Parliament; for to them, and to them alone, the reſolution refers. I am one of thoſe who have publickly and ſtrongly urged thoſe objections. I hope I ſhall be thought only to do what is neceſſary to my juſtification, thus publickly, ſolemnly, and heavily cenſured by thoſe whom I moſt value and eſteem, when I firmly contend, that the objections which I, with many others of the friends to the Duke of Portland, have made to Mr. Fox's conduct, are not *calumnies*, but founded on truth; that they are not *few*, but many; and that they are not *light and trivial*, but in a very high degree, ſerious and important.

That I may avoid the imputation of throwing out, even privately, any looſe random imputations againſt the public conduct of a gentleman, for whom I once entertained a very warm affection, and whoſe abilities I regard

regard with the greateſt admiration, I will put down diſtinctly and articulately, ſome of the matters of objection which I feel to his late doctrines and proceedings, truſting that I ſhall be able to demonſtrate to the friends, whoſe good opinion I would ſtill cultivate, that not levity, nor caprice, nor leſs defenſible motives, but that very grave reaſons influence my judgment. I think that the ſpirit of his late proceedings is wholly alien to our national policy, and to the peace, to the proſperity, and to the legal liberties of this nation, *according to our ancient domeſtic and appropriated mode of holding them.*

Viewing things in that light, my confidence in him is not encreaſed, but totally deſtroyed by thoſe proceedings. I cannot conceive it a matter of honour or duty (but the direct contrary) in any member of parliament, to continue ſyſtematick oppoſition for the purpoſe of putting Government under difficulties, until Mr. Fox (with all his preſent ideas) ſhall have the principal direction of affairs placed in his hands; and until the preſent body of adminiſtration (with their ideas and

and meaſures) is of courſe overturned and diſſolved.

To come to particulars:

1. The Laws and Conſtitution of the Kingdom, entruſt the ſole and excluſive right of treating with foreign potentates, to the King. This is an undiſputed part of the legal prerogative of the Crown. However, notwithſtanding this, Mr. Fox, without the knowledge or participation of any one perſon in the Houſe of Commons, with whom he was bound by every party principle, in matters of delicacy and importance, confidentially to communicate, thought proper to ſend Mr. Adair, as his repreſentative, and with his cypher, to St. Peterſburgh, there to fruſtrate the objects for which the Miniſter from the Crown was authorized to treat. He ſucceeded in this his deſign, and did actually fruſtrate the King's Miniſter in ſome of the objects of his negociation.

This proceeding of Mr. Fox does not (as I conceive) amount to abſolute high treaſon: Ruſſia, though on bad terms, not having been

been then declaredly at war with this kingdom. But ſuch a proceeding is, in law, not very remote from that offence, and is undoubtedly a moſt unconſtitutional act, and an high treaſonable miſdemeanor.

The legitimate and ſure mode of communication between this nation and foreign powers, is rendered uncertain, precarious, and treacherous, by being divided into two channels, one with the Government, one with the head of a party in Oppoſition to that Government; by which means the foreign powers can never be aſſured of the real authority or validity of any public tranſaction whatſoever.

On the other hand, the advantage taken of the diſcontent which at that time prevailed in parliament and in the nation, to give to an individual an influence directly againſt the Government of his country, in a foreign court, has made a highway into England for the intrigues of foreign courts in our affairs. This is a ſore evil; an evil from which, before this time, England was more free than any other nation. Nothing can

preſerve us from that evil—which connects cabinet factions abroad with popular factions here,—but the keeping ſacred the Crown, as the only channel of communication with every other nation.

This proceeding of Mr. Fox has given a ſtrong countenance and an encouraging example to the doctrines and practices of the Revolution and Conſtitutional Societies, and of other miſchievous ſocieties of that deſcription, who, without any legal authority, and even without any corporate capacity, are in the habit of propoſing, and to the beſt of their power, of forming leagues and alliances with France.

This proceeding, which ought to be reprobated on all the general principles of government, is, in a more narrow view of things, not leſs reprehenſible. It tends to the prejudice of the whole of the Duke of Portland's late party, by diſcrediting the principles upon which they ſupported Mr. Fox in the Ruſſian buſineſs, as if they, of that party alſo, had proceeded in their parliamentary oppoſition, on the ſame miſchievous principles

principles which actuated Mr. Fox in ſending Mr. Adair on his embaſſy.

2. Very ſoon after his ſending this embaſſy to Ruſſia, that is, in the Spring of 1792, a covenanting club or aſſociation was formed in London, calling itſelf by the ambitious and invidious title of "*The Friends of the People.*" It was compoſed of many of Mr. Fox's own moſt intimate, perſonal, and party friends, joined to a very conſiderable part of the members of thoſe miſchievous aſſociations called the Revolution Society, and the Conſtitutional Society. Mr. Fox muſt have been well apprized of the progreſs of that ſociety, in every one of its ſteps; if not of the very origin of it. I certainly was informed of both, who had no connexion with the deſign, directly or indirectly. His influence over the perſons who compoſed the leading part in that aſſociation, was, and is unbounded. I hear, that he expreſſed ſome diſapprobation of this club in one caſe, (that of Mr. St. John) where his conſent was formally aſked; yet he never attempted ſeriouſly to put a ſtop to the aſſociation, or to diſavow it, or to controul, check, or modify

it in any way whatſoever. If he had pleaſed, without difficulty, he might have ſuppreſſed it in its beginning. However, he did not only not ſuppreſs it in its beginning, but encouraged it in every part of its progreſs, at that particular time, when Jacobin Clubs (under the very ſame, or ſimilar titles) were making ſuch dreadful havock in a country not thirty miles from the coaſt of England, and when every motive of moral prudence called for the diſcouragement of ſocieties formed for the encreaſe of popular pretenſions to power and direction.

3. When the proceedings of this ſociety of the Friends of the People, as well as others acting in the ſame ſpirit, had cauſed a very ſerious alarm in the mind of the Duke of Portland, and of many good patriots, he publickly, in the Houſe of Commons, treated their apprehenſions and conduct with the greateſt aſperity and ridicule. He condemned and vilified, in the moſt inſulting and outrageous terms, the proclamation iſſued by Government on that occaſion—though he well knew, that it had paſſed through the Duke of Portland's hands, that it had received his fulleſt

fulleſt approbation, and that it was the reſult of an actual interview between that noble Duke and Mr. Pitt. During the diſcuſſion of its merits in the Houſe of Commons, Mr. Fox countenanced and juſtified the chief promoters of that aſſociation; and he received in return, a publick aſſurance from them of an inviolable adherence to him, ſingly and perſonally. On account of this proceeding, a very great number (I preſume to ſay, not the leaſt grave and wiſe part) of the Duke of Portland's friends in Parliament, and many out of Parliament, who are of the ſame deſcription, have become ſeparated from that time to this from Mr. Fox's particular Cabal; very few of which Cabal are, or ever have, ſo much as pretended to be attached to the Duke of Portland, or to pay any reſpect to him or his opinions.

4. At the beginning of this ſeſſion, when the ſober part of the nation was a ſecond time generally and juſtly alarmed at the progreſs of the French arms on the Continent, and at the ſpreading of their horrid principles and cabals in England, Mr. Fox did not (as had been uſual in caſes of far leſs

moment) call together any meeting of the Duke of Portland's friends in the Houſe of Commons, for the purpoſe of taking their opinion on the conduct to be purſued in Parliament at that critical Juncture. He concerted his meaſures (if with any perſons at all) with the friends of Lord Lanſdowne, and thoſe calling themſelves Friends of the People, and others not in the ſmalleſt degree attached to the Duke of Portland; by which conduct he wilfully gave up (in my opinion) all pretenſions to be conſidered as of that party, and much more to be conſidered as the Leader and Mouth of it in the Houſe of Commons. This could not give much encouragement to thoſe who had been ſeparated from Mr. Fox, on account of his conduct on the firſt proclamation, to rejoin that party.

5. Not having conſulted any of the Duke of Portlands party in the Houſe of Commons; and not having conſulted them, becauſe he had reaſon to know, that the courſe he had reſolved to purſue would be highly diſagreeable to them, he repreſented the alarm, which was a ſecond time given and taken, in ſtill more invidious colours

colours than thoſe in which he painted the alarms of the former year. He deſcribed thoſe alarms in this manner, although the cauſe of them was then grown far leſs equivocal, and far more urgent. He even went ſo far as to treat the ſuppoſition of the growth of a Jacobin ſpirit in England as a libel on the nation. As to the danger from *abroad*, on the firſt day of the ſeſſion, he ſaid little or nothing upon the ſubject. He contented himſelf with defending the ruling factions in France, and with accuſing the publick Councils of this kingdom of every ſort of evil deſign on the liberties of the people; declaring diſtinctly, ſtrongly, and preciſely, that the whole danger of the nation was from the growth of the Power of the Crown. The policy of this declaration was obvious. It was in ſubſervience to the general plan of diſabling us from taking any ſteps againſt France. To counteract the alarm given by the progreſs of Jacobin arms and principles, he endeavoured to excite an oppoſite alarm concerning the growth of the Power of the Crown. If that alarm ſhould prevail, he knew that the nation never would be brought by arms to oppoſe the growth of the Jacobin empire; becauſe it is obvious that

war

war does, in its very nature, neceſſitate the Commons conſiderably to ſtrengthen the hands of Government; and if that ſtrength ſhould itſelf be the object of terrour, we could have no war.

6. In the extraordinary and violent ſpeeches of that day, he attributed all the evils which the publick had ſuffered, to the Proclamation of the preceding ſummer; though he ſpoke in preſence of the Duke of Portland's own ſon, the Marquis of Titchfield, who had ſeconded the Addreſs on that Proclamation; and in preſence of the Duke of Portland's brother, Lord Edward Bentinck, and ſeveral others of his beſt friends and neareſt relations.

7. On that day, that is, on the 13th of December, 1792, he propoſed an amendment to the Addreſs, which ſtands on the Journals of the Houſe, and which is, perhaps, the moſt extraordinary record which ever did ſtand upon them. To introduce this amendment, he not only ſtruck out the part of the propoſed Addreſs which alluded to inſurrections, upon the ground of the objections which he took

to the legality of calling together Parliament, (objections which I muſt ever think litigious and ſophiſtical) but he likewiſe ſtruck out that *part which related to the Cabals and Conſpiracies of the French Faction in England,* although their practices and correſpondences were of public notoriety. Mr. Cooper and Mr. Watt had been deputed from Mancheſter to the Jacobins. Theſe ambaſſadors were received by them as Britiſh Repreſentatives. Other deputations of Engliſh had been received at the bar of the National Aſſembly. They had gone the length of giving ſupplies to the Jacobin armies; and they in return had received promiſes of military aſſiſtance to forward their deſigns in England. A regular correſpondence for fraternizing the two nations had alſo been carried on by ſocieties in London with a great number of the Jacobin ſocieties in France. This correſpondence had alſo for its object the pretended improvement of the Britiſh Conſtitution.—What is the moſt remarkable, and by much the more miſchievous part of his proceedings that day, Mr. Fox likewiſe ſtruck out every thing in the Addreſs which *related to the tokens of Ambition given by France, her aggreſſions upon our allies, and the*

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ſudden and dangerous growth of her power upon every ſide; and inſtead of all thoſe weighty, and at that time, neceſſary matters, by which the Houſe of Commons was (in a criſis, ſuch as perhaps Europe never ſtood) to give aſſurances to our allies, ſtrength to our Government, and a check to the common enemy of Europe, he ſubſtituted nothing but a criminal charge on the conduct of the Britiſh Government for calling Parliament together, and an engagement to enquire into that conduct.

8. If it had pleaſed God to ſuffer him to ſucceed in this his project, for the amendment to the Addreſs, he would for ever have ruined this nation, along with the reſt of Europe. At home all the Jacobin ſocieties, formed for the utter deſtruction of our Conſtitution, would have lifted up their heads, which had been beaten down by the two Proclamations. Thoſe ſocieties would have been infinitely ſtrengthened and multiplied in every quarter; their dangerous foreign communications would have been left broad and open; the Crown would not have been authorized to take any meaſure whatever for our immediate defence by ſea or land. The cloſeſt, the moſt natural, the

the neareſt, and, at the ſame time, from many internal as well as external circumſtances, the weakeſt of our allies, Holland, would have been given up, bound hand and foot, to France, juſt on the point of invading that republick. A general conſternation would have ſeized upon all Europe; and all alliance with every other power, except France, would have been for ever rendered impracticable to us. I think it impoſſible for any man, who regards the dignity and ſafety of his country, or indeed the common ſafety of mankind, ever to forget Mr. Fox's proceedings in that tremendous criſis of all human affairs.

9. Mr. Fox very ſoon had reaſon to be appriſed of the general diſlike of the Duke of Portland's friends to this conduct. Some of thoſe who had even voted with him, the day after their vote expreſſed their abhorrence of his amendment, their ſenſe of its inevitable tendency, and their total alienation from the principles and maxims upon which it was made; yet, the very next day, that is, on Friday, the 14th of December, he brought on what in effect was the very ſame

buſineſs, and on the ſame principles, a *ſecond* time.

10. Although the Houſe does not uſually ſit on Saturday, he a *third* time brought on another propoſition, in the ſame ſpirit, and purſued it with ſo much heat and perſeverance as to ſit into Sunday; a thing not known in Parliament for many years.

11. In all theſe motions and debates he wholly departed from all the political principles relative to France, (conſidered merely as a ſtate, and independent of its Jacobin form of government) which had hitherto been held fundamental in this country, and which he had himſelf held more ſtrongly than any man in Parliament. He at that time ſtudiouſly ſeparated himſelf from thoſe to whoſe ſentiments he uſed to profeſs no ſmall regard, although thoſe ſentiments were publickly declared. I had then no concern in the party, having been for ſome time, with all outrage, excluded from it; but, on general principles, I muſt ſay, that a perſon who aſſumes to be leader of a party compoſed of freemen and of gentlemen, ought to

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pay ſome degree of deference to their feelings, and even to their prejudices. He ought to have ſome degree of management for their credit and influence in their country. He ſhewed ſo very little of this delicacy, that he compared the alarm raiſed in the minds of the Duke of Portland's party, (which was his own) an alarm in which they ſympathized with the greater part of the nation, to the panick produced by the pretended Popiſh plot in the reign of Charles the Second —deſcribing it to be, as that was, a contrivance of knaves, and believed only by well-meaning dupes and madmen.

12. The Monday following, (the 17th of December) he purſued the ſame conduct. The means uſed in England to co-operate with the Jacobin army in politicks, agreed with their modes of proceeding; I allude to the miſchievous writings circulated with much induſtry and ſucceſs, as well as the ſeditious clubs, which at that time, added not a little to the alarm taken by obſerving and well-informed men. The writings and the clubs were two evils which marched together. Mr. Fox diſcovered the greateſt poſſible diſ-

poſition to favour and countenance the one as well as the other of theſe two grand inſtruments of the French ſyſtem. He would hardly conſider any political writing whatſoever, as a libel, or as a fit object of proſecution. At a time in which the preſs has been the grand inſtrument of the ſubverſion of order, of morals, of religion, and I may ſay of human ſociety itſelf, to carry the doctrines of its liberty higher than ever it has been known by its moſt extravagant aſſertors even in France, gave occaſion to very ſerious reflections. Mr. Fox treated the aſſociations for proſecuting theſe libels, as tending to prevent the improvement of the human mind, and as a mobbiſh tyranny. He thought proper to compare them with the riotous aſſemblies of Lord George Gordon in 1780, declaring that he had adviſed his friends in Weſtminſter, to ſign the aſſociations whether they agreed to them or not, in order that they might avoid deſtruction to their perſons or their houſes, or a deſertion of their ſhops. This inſidious advice tended to confound thoſe who wiſhed well to the object of the aſſociation, with the ſeditious, againſt whom the aſſociation was directed. By this ſtratagem, the confederacy intended for preſerving the

Britiſh

Britiſh conſtitution, and the public peace, would be wholly defeated. The magiſtrates, utterly incapable of diſtinguiſhing the friends from the enemies of order, would in vain look for ſupport when they ſtood in the greateſt need of it.

13. Mr. Fox's whole conduct, on this occaſion, was without example. The very morning after theſe violent declamations in the Houſe of Commons againſt the aſſociation, (that is on Tueſday the 18th) he went himſelf to a meeting of St. George's pariſh, and there ſigned an aſſociation of the nature and tendency of thoſe he had the night before ſo vehemently condemned; and ſeveral of his particular and moſt intimate friends, inhabitants of that pariſh, attended and ſigned along with him.

14. Immediately after this extraordinary ſtep, and in order perfectly to defeat the ends of that aſſociation againſt Jacobin publications, (which, contrary to his opinions, he had promoted and ſigned) a miſchievous ſociety was formed under his auſpices, called, the *Friends of the Liberty of the Preſs*. Their title

title groundleſsly inſinuated, that the freedom of the preſs had lately ſuffered, or was now threatened with ſome violation. This ſociety was only, in reality, another modification of the ſociety calling itſelf the *Friends of the People*, which, in the preceding ſummer had cauſed ſo much uneaſineſs in the Duke of Portland's mind, and in the minds of ſeveral of his friends. This new ſociety was compoſed of many, if not moſt of the members of the club of the *Friends of the People*, with the addition of a vaſt multitude of others (ſuch as Mr. Horne Tooke) of the worſt and moſt ſeditious diſpoſitions that could be found in the whole kingdom. In the firſt meeting of this club, Mr. Erſkine took the lead, and directly (without any diſavowal ever ſince on Mr. Fox's part) *made uſe of his name and authority in favour of its formation and purpoſes.* In the ſame meeting Mr. Erſkine had thanks for his defence of *Paine*, which amounted to a complete avowal of that Jacobin incendiary; elſe it is impoſſible to know how Mr. Erſkine ſhould have deſerved ſuch marked applauſes for acting merely as a lawyer for his fee, in the ordinary courſe of his profeſſion.

15. Indeed

15. Indeed Mr. Fox appeared the general patron of all ſuch perſons and proceedings. When Lord Edward Fitzgerald, and other perſons, for practices of the moſt dangerous kind, in Paris and in London, were removed from the King's Guards, Mr. Fox took occaſion, in the Houſe of Commons, heavily to cenſure that act as unjuſt and oppreſſive, and tending to make officers bad citizens. There were few, however, who did not call for ſome ſuch meaſures on the part of Government, as of abſolute neceſſity for the King's perſonal ſafety, as well as that of the publick; and nothing but the miſtaken lenity (with which ſuch practices were rather diſcountenanced than puniſhed) could poſſibly deſerve reprehenſion in what was done with regard to thoſe gentlemen.

16. Mr. Fox, regularly and ſyſtematically, and with a diligence long unuſual to him, did every thing he could to countenance the ſame principle of fraternity and connexion with the Jacobins abroad, and the National Convention of France, for which theſe officers had been removed from the Guards. For when a bill (feeble and lax indeed, and far ſhort of the

the vigour required by the conjuncture) was brought in for removing out of the kingdom the emiſſaries of France, Mr. Fox oppoſed it with all his might. He purſued a vehement and detailed oppoſition to it through all its ſtages, deſcribing it as a meaſure contrary to the exiſting treaties between Great Britain and France; as a violation of the law of nations, and as an outrage on the great charter itſelf.

17. In the ſame manner, and with the ſame heat, he oppoſed a bill, which, (though aukward and inartificial in its conſtruction) was right and wiſe in its principle, and was precedented in the beſt times, and abſolutely neceſſary at that juncture,—I mean the Traitorous Correſpondence Bill. By theſe means the enemy, rendered infinitely dangerous by the links of real faction and pretended commerce, would have been (had Mr. Fox ſucceeded) enabled to carry on the war againſt us by our own reſources. For this purpoſe that enemy would have had his agents and traitors in the midſt of us.

18. When at length war was actually declared, by the uſurpers in France, againſt this kingdom,

kingdom, and declared whilſt they were pretending a negociation through Dumourier with Lord Auckland, Mr. Fox ſtill continued, through the whole of the proceedings, to diſcredit the national honour and juſtice, and to throw the entire blame of the war on Parliament, and on his own country, as acting with violence, haughtineſs, and want of equity. He frequently aſſerted, both at the time and ever ſince, that the war, though declared by France, was provoked by us, and that it was wholly unneceſſary, and fundamentally unjuſt.

19. He has loſt no opportunity of railing, in the moſt virulent manner, and in the moſt unmeaſured language, at every foreign power with whom we could now, or at any time, contract any uſeful or effectual alliance againſt France, declaring that he hoped no alliance with thoſe powers was made, or was in a train of being made *. He always expreſſed himſelf with the utmoſt horror concerning ſuch alliances, ſo did all his phalanx. Mr. Sheridan, in particular, after one of his invectives againſt thoſe powers,

* It is an exception, that in one of his laſt ſpeeches, (but not before) Mr. Fox ſeemed to think, an alliance with Spain might be proper.

ſitting by him, ſaid, with manifeſt marks of his approbation, that if we muſt go to war, he had rather go to war alone than with ſuch allies.

20. Immediately after the French declaration of war againſt us, Parliament addreſſed the King in ſupport of the war againſt them, as juſt and neceſſary, and provoked as well as formally declared againſt Great Britain. He did not divide the Houſe upon this meaſure; yet he immediately followed this our ſolemn Parliamentary engagement to the King, with a motion propoſing a ſet of reſolutions, the effect of which was, that the two Houſes were to load themſelves with every kind of reproach for having made the addreſs, which they had juſt carried to the Throne. He commenced this long ſtring of criminatory reſolutions againſt his country, (if King, Lords and Commons of Great Britain, and a decided majority without doors are his country) *with a declaration againſt intermeddling in the interior concerns of France.* The purport of this reſolution of non-interference, is a thing unexampled in the hiſtory of the world, when one nation has been actually at war with another. The beſt writers on the law of nations, give no

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ſort of countenance to his doctrine of non-interference, in the extent and manner in which he uſed it, *even when there is no war.* When the war exiſts, not one authority is againſt it in all its latitude. His doctrine is equally contrary to the enemy's uniform practice, who, whether in peace or in war, makes it his great aim, not only to change the Government, but to make an entire revolution in the whole of the ſocial order in every country.

The object of the laſt of this extraordinary ſtring of reſolutions moved by Mr. Fox, was to adviſe the Crown not to enter into ſuch an engagement with any foreign power, ſo as to hinder us from making a *ſeparate* peace with France, or which might tend to enable any of thoſe powers to introduce a government in that country, other than ſuch as thoſe perſons whom he calls the people of France, ſhall chooſe to eſtabliſh. In ſhort, the whole of theſe reſolutions appeared to have but one drift---namely, the ſacrifice of our own domeſtick dignity and ſafety, and the independency of Europe, to the ſupport of this ſtrange mixture of anarchy and tyranny which prevails in France, and which Mr. Fox and his party were pleaſed to call a

Government. The immediate conſequences of theſe meaſures was (by an example, the ill effects of which, on the whole world, are not to be calculated) to ſecure the robbers of the innocent nobility, gentry, and eccleſiaſticks of France, in the enjoyment of the ſpoil they have made of the eſtates, houſes, and goods of their fellow-citizens.

21. Not ſatisfied with moving theſe reſolutions, tending to confirm this horrible tyranny and robbery, and with actually dividing the Houſe on the firſt of the long ſtring which they compoſed, in a few days afterwards he encouraged and ſupported Mr. Grey in producing the very ſame ſtrings in a new form, and in moving, under the ſhape of an addreſs of Parliament to the Crown, another virulent libel on all its own proceedings in this ſeſſion, in which not only all the ground of the reſolutions was again travelled over, but much new inflammatory matter was introduced. In particular, a charge was made, that Great Britain had not interpoſed to prevent the laſt partition of Poland. On this head the party dwelt very largely, and very vehemently. Mr. Fox's intention, in the choice of this extraordinary topic, was evident enough. He well

well knows two things; firſt, that no wiſe or honeſt man can approve of that partition, or can contemplate it without prognoſticating great miſchief from it to all countries at ſome future time. Secondly, he knows quite as well, that, let our opinions on that partition be what they will, England, by itſelf, is not in a ſituation to afford to Poland any aſſiſtance whatſoever. The purpoſe of the introduction of Poliſh politics into this diſcuſſion, was not for the ſake of Poland; it was to throw an odium upon thoſe who are obliged to decline the cauſe of juſtice from their impoſſibility of ſupporting a cauſe which they approve; as if we, who think more ſtrongly on this ſubject than he does, were of a party againſt Poland, becauſe we are obliged to act with ſome of the authors of that injuſtice, againſt our common enemy, France. But the great and leading purpoſe of this introduction of Poland into the debates on the French war, was to divert the public attention from what was in our power, that is, from a ſteady co-operation againſt France, to a quarrel with the Allies for the ſake of a Poliſh war, which, for any uſeful purpoſe to Poland, he knew it was out of our power to make. If England can touch Poland ever ſo remotely, it muſt be through the medium of alliances.

But

But by attacking all the combined powers together for their ſuppoſed unjuſt aggreſſion upon France, he bound them by a new common intereſt, not ſeparately to join England for the reſcue of Poland. The propoſition could only mean to do what all the writers of his party in the Morning Chronicle have aimed at perſuading the public to, through the whole of the laſt autumn and winter, and to this hour; that is, to an alliance with the Jacobins of France, for the pretended purpoſe of ſuccouring Poland. This curious project would leave to Great Britain no other Ally in all Europe, except its old enemy, France.

22. Mr. Fox, after the firſt day's diſcuſſion on the queſtion for the addreſs, was at length driven to admit---(to admit rather than to urge, and that very faintly) that France had diſcovered ambitious views, which none of his partizans, that I recollect, (Mr. Sheridan excepted) did, however, either urge or admit. What is remarkable enough, all the points admitted againſt the Jacobins, were brought to bear in their favour as much as thoſe in which they were defended. For when Mr. Fox admitted that the conduct of the Jacobins did diſcover ambition,

tion, he always ended his admiſſion of their ambitious views by an apology for them, inſiſting, that the univerſally hoſtile diſpoſition ſhewn to them, rendered their ambition a ſort of defenſive policy. Thus, on whatever roads he travelled, they all terminated in recommending a recognition of their pretended Republic, and in the plan of ſending an ambaſſador to it. This was the burthen of all his ſong---" Every thing which we could reaſonably hope from war, would be obtained from treaty." It is to be obſerved, however, that in all theſe debates, Mr. Fox never once ſtated to the Houſe upon what ground it was he conceived, that all the objects of the French ſyſtem of united fanaticiſm and ambition would inſtantly be given up whenever England ſhould think fit to propoſe a treaty. On propoſing ſo ſtrange a recognition, and ſo humiliating an embaſſy as he moved, he was bound to produce his authority, if any authority he had. He ought to have done this the rather, becauſe Le Brun, in his firſt propoſitions, and in his anſwers to Lord Grenville, defended, *on principle, not on temporary convenience*, every thing which was objected to France, and ſhewed not the ſmalleſt diſpoſition to give up any one of the points in diſcuſſion. Mr.

Fox muſt alſo have known, that the Convention had paſſed to the order of the day, on a propoſition to give ſome ſort of explanation or modification to the hoſtile decree of the 19th of November, for exciting inſurrections in all countries; a decree known to be peculiarly pointed at Great Britain. The whole proceeding of the French adminiſtration was the moſt remote that could be imagined from furniſhing any indication of a pacific diſpoſition: for at the very time in which it was pretended that the Jacobins entertained thoſe boaſted pacific intentions, at the very time in which Mr. Fox was urging a treaty with them, not content with refuſing a modification of the decree for inſurrections, they publiſhed their ever memorable decree of the 15th of December, 1792, for diſorganizing every country in Europe, into which they ſhould on any occaſion ſet their foot; and on the 25th and the 30th of the ſame month, they ſolemnly, and on the laſt of theſe days, practically confirmed that decree.

23. But Mr. Fox had himſelf taken good care in the negociation he propoſed, that France ſhould not be obliged to make any very

very great conceſſions to her preſumed moderation—for he had laid down one general comprehenſive rule, with him (as he ſaid) conſtant and inviolable. This rule, in fact, would not only have left to the faction in France, all the property and power they had uſurped at home, but moſt, if not all, of the conqueſts which by their atrocious perfidy and violence, they had made abroad. The principle laid down by Mr. Fox, is this, "*That every ſtate, in the concluſion of a war, has a right to avail itſelf of its conqueſts towards an indemnification.*" This principle (true or falſe) is totally contrary to the policy which this country has purſued with France, at various periods, particularly at the treaty of Ryſwick, in the laſt century, and at the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, in this. Whatever the merits of his rule may be, in the eyes of neutral judges, it is a rule, which no ſtateſman before him ever laid down in favour of the adverſe power with whom he was to negotiate. The adverſe party himſelf, may ſafely be truſted to take care of his *own* aggrandizement. But (as if the black boxes of theſeveral parties had been exchanged) Mr. Fox's Engliſh ambaſſador, by ſome odd miſtake, would find himſelf

cehrged with the concerns of France. If we were to leave France as ſhe ſtood at the time when Mr. Fox propoſed to treat with her, that formidable power muſt have been infinitely ſtrengthened, and almoſt every other power in Europe as much weakened, by the extraordinary baſis which he laid for a treaty. For Avignon muſt go from the Pope; Savoy (at leaſt) from the King of Sardinia, if not Nice. Liege, Mentz, Salm, Deux Ponts, and Bâle, muſt be ſeparated from Germany. On this ſide of the Rhine, Liege, at leaſt, muſt be loſt to the empire, and added to France. Mr. Fox's general principal fully covered all this. How much of theſe territories came within his rule, he never attempted to define. He kept a profound ſilence as to Germany. As to the Netherlands he was ſomething more explicit. He ſaid, (if I recollect right) that France, on that ſide, might expect ſomething towards ſtrengthening her frontier. As to the remaining parts of the Netherlands, which he ſuppoſed France might conſent to ſurrender, he went ſo far as to declare that England ought not to permit the Emperor to be repoſſeſſed of the remainder of the ten Provinces, but that *the People* ſhould chooſe

ſuch a form of independent Government as they liked. This propoſition of Mr. Fox was juſt the arrangement which the uſurpation in France had all along propoſed to make. As the circumſtances were at that time, and have been ever ſince, his propoſition fully indicated what Government the Flemmings *muſt* have in the ſtated extent of what was left to them. A Government ſo ſet up in the Netherlands, whether compulſory, or by the choice of the Sans-Culottes, (who he well knew were to be the real electors, and the ſole electors) in whatever name it was to exiſt, muſt evidently depend for its exiſtence, as it had done for its original formation, on France. In reality, it muſt have ended in that point, to which, piece by piece, the French were then actually bringing all the Netherlands; that is, an incorporation with France, as a body of new departments, juſt as Savoy and Liege, and the reſt of their pretended independent popular ſovereignties, have been united to their republic. Such an arrangement muſt have deſtroyed Auſtria; it muſt have left Holland always at the mercy of France; it muſt totally and for ever cut off all political

communication between England and the Continent. Such muſt have been the ſituation of Europe, according to Mr. Fox's ſyſtem of politicks, however laudable his perſonal motives may have been in propoſing ſo complete a change in the whole ſyſtem of Great Britain, with regard to all the Continental powers.

24. After it had been generally ſuppoſed that all publick buſineſs was over for the ſeſſion, and that Mr. Fox had exhauſted all the modes of preſſing this French ſcheme, he thought proper to take a ſtep beyond every expectation, and which demonſtrated his wonderful eagerneſs and perſeverance in his cauſe, as well as the nature and true character of the cauſe itſelf. This ſtep was taken by Mr. Fox immediately after his giving his aſſent to the Grant of Supply voted to him by Mr. Serjeant Adair and a Committee of Gentlemen, who aſſumed to themſelves to act in the name of the publick. In the inſtrument of his acceptance of this Grant, Mr. Fox took occaſion to aſſure them, that he would always perſevere *in the ſame conduct* which had procured to him ſo honour-

able a mark of the public approbation. He was as good as his word.

25. It was not long before an opportunity was found, or made, for proving the ſincerity of his profeſſions, and demonſtrating his gratitude to thoſe who had given publick and unequivocal marks of their approbation of his late conduct. One of the moſt virulent of the Jacobin Faction, Mr. Gurney, a banker at Norwich, had all along diſtinguiſhed himſelf by his French politicks. By the means of this Gentleman, and of his aſſociates of the ſame deſcription, one of the moſt inſidious and dangerous hand-bills that ever was ſeen, had been circulated at Norwich againſt the war, drawn up in an hypocritical tone of compaſſion for the Poor. This Addreſs to the Populace of Norwich was to play in concert with an Addreſs to Mr. Fox; it was ſigned by Mr. Gurney and the higher part of the French Fraternity in that town. In this paper Mr. Fox is applauded for his Conduct throughout the ſeſſion; and requeſted, before the prorogation, to make a motion for an immediate Peace with France.

26. Mr.

26. Mr. Fox did not revoke to this ſuit: he readily and thankfully undertook the taſk aſſigned to him. Not content, however, with merely falling in with their wiſhes, he propoſed a taſk on his part to the Gentlemen of Norwich, which was, *that they ſhould move the people without doors to petition againſt the War.* He ſaid, that without ſuch aſſiſtance, little good could be expected from any thing he might attempt within the walls of the Houſe of Commons. In the mean time, to animate his Norwich friends in their endeavours to beſiege Parliament, he ſnatched the firſt opportunity to give notice of a motion, which he very ſoon after made, namely, to addreſs the Crown to make Peace with France. The Addreſs was ſo worded as to co-operate with the hand-bill in bringing forward matter calculated to inflame the manufacturers throughout the kingdom.

27. In ſupport of his motion, he declaimed in the moſt virulent ſtrain, even beyond any of his former invectives, againſt every power with whom we were then, and are now, acting againſt France. In the *moral* forum, ſome of theſe powers certainly deſerve all the ill he

ſaid

ſaid of them; but the *political* effect aimed at, evidently was to turn our indignation from France, with whom we were at war, upon Ruſſia, or Pruſſia, or Auſtria, or Sardinia, or all of them together. In conſequence of his knowledge that we *could* not effectually do *without* them, and his reſolution that we *ſhould* not act *with* them, he propoſed, that having, as he aſſerted, " obtained the only " avowed object of the War (the evacuation " off Holland), we ought to conclude an " inſtant Peace."

28. Mr. Fox could not be ignorant of the miſtaken baſis upon which his motion was grounded. He was not ignorant, that, though the attempt of Dumourier on Holland (ſo very near ſucceeding), and the navigation of the Scheld (a part of the ſame piece), were among the *immediate* cauſes, they were by no means the only cauſes alledged for Parliament's taking that offence at the proceedings of France, for which the Jacobins were ſo prompt in declaring war upon this kingdom. Other full as weighty cauſes had been alledged: They were, 1. The general overbearing and deſperate ambition

bition of that Faction. 2. Their actual attacks on every nation in Europe. 3. Their uſurpation of territories in the empire with the governments of which they had no pretence of quarrel. 4. Their perpetual and irrevocable conſolidation with their own dominions of every territory of the Netherlands, of Germany, and of Italy, of which they got a temporary poſſeſſion. 5. The miſchiefs attending the prevalence of their ſyſtem, which would make the ſucceſs of their ambitious deſigns a new and peculiar ſpecies of calamity in the world. 6. Their formal publick decrees; particularly thoſe of the 19th of November, and 15th and 25th of December. 7. Their notorious attempts to undermine the Conſtitution of this country. 8. Their public reception of deputations of traitors for that direct purpoſe. 9. Their murder of their Sovereign, declared by moſt of the members of the Convention, who ſpoke with their vote (without a diſavowal from any) to be perpetrated, as an example to *all* Kings, and a precedent for *all* ſubjects to follow. All theſe, and not the Scheld alone, or the invaſion of Holland, were urged by the Miniſter, and by Mr. Windham,

Windham, by myſelf, and by others who ſpoke in thoſe debates, as cauſes for bringing France to a ſenſe of her wrong in the war which ſhe declared againſt us. Mr. Fox well knew, that not one man argued for the neceſſity of a vigorous reſiſtance to France, who did not ſtate the war as being for the very exiſtence of the ſocial order here, and every part of Europe; who did not ſtate his opinion, that this war was not at all a foreign War of Empire, but as much for our Liberties, Properties, Laws, and Religion; and even more ſo than any we had ever been engaged in. This was the war, which, according to Mr. Fox and Mr. Gurney, we were to abandon before the enemy had felt, in the ſlighteſt degree, the impreſſion of our arms.

29. Had Mr. Fox's diſgraceful propoſal been complied with, this kingdom would have been ſtained with a blot of perfidy hitherto without an example in our hiſtory, and with far leſs excuſe than any act of perfidy which we find in the hiſtory of any other nation. The moment, when by the incredible exertions of Auſtria (very little

through our's) the temporary deliverance of Holland (in effect our own deliverance) had been atchieved, he adviſed the Houſe inſtantly to abandon her to that very enemy, from whoſe arms ſhe had freed ourſelves, and the cloſeſt of our allies.

30. But we are not to be impoſed on by forms of language. We muſt act on the ſubſtance of Things. To abandon Auſtria in this manner, was to abandon Holland itſelf. For ſuppoſe France, encouraged and ſtrengthened as ſhe muſt have been by our treacherous deſertion, ſuppoſe France, I ſay, to ſucceed againſt Auſtria, (as ſhe had ſucceeded the very year before) England would, after its diſarmament, have nothing in the world but the inviolable faith of Jacobiniſm, and the ſteady politics of anarchy to depend upon, againſt France's renewing the very ſame attempts upon Holland, and renewing them (conſidering what Holland was and is) with much better proſpects of ſucceſs. Mr. Fox muſt have been well aware, that if we were to break with the greater Continental Powers, and particularly to come to a rupture with them, in the violent and intemperate mode in which he

he would have made the breach, the defence of Holland againſt a foreign enemy, and a ſtrong domeſtick faction, muſt hereafter reſt ſolely upon England, without the chance of a ſingle Ally, either on that or on any other occaſion. So far as to the pretended ſole object of the war, which Mr. Fox ſuppoſed to be ſo completely obtained, (but which then was not at all, and at this day is not completely obtained,) as to leave us nothing elſe to do than to cultivate a peaceful, quiet correſpondence with thoſe quiet, peaceable and moderate people, the Jacobins of France.

31. To induce us to this, Mr. Fox laboured hard to make it appear, that the powers with whom we acted, were full as ambitious and as perfidious as the French. This might be true as to *other* nations. They had not, however, been ſo to *Us* or to Holland. He produced no proof of active ambition and ill faith againſt Auſtria. But ſuppoſing the combined Powers had been all thus faithleſs, and had been all alike ſo, there was one circumſtance which made an eſſential difference between them and France. I need not therefore be at the trouble of conteſting this point, which,

however, in this latitude, and as at all affecting Great Britain and Holland, I deny utterly: Be it ſo. But the great Monarchies have it in their power to keep their faith *if they pleaſe*, becauſe they are Governments of eſtabliſhed and recognized authority at home and abroad. France had, in reality, no Government. The very factions who exerciſed power, had no ſtability. The French Convention had no powers of peace or war. Suppoſing the Convention to be free (moſt aſſuredly it was not) they had ſhewn no diſpoſition to abandon their projects. Though long driven out of Liege, it was not many days before Mr. Fox's motion, that they ſtill continued to claim it as a country, which their principles of fraternity bound them to protect, that is, to ſubdue and to regulate at their pleaſure. That party which Mr. Fox inclined moſt to favour and truſt, and from which he muſt have received his aſſurances (if any he did receive) that is, the *Briſſotins*, were then either priſoners or fugitives. The Party which prevailed over them (that of Danton and Marat) was itſelf in a tottering condition, and was diſowned by a very great part of France. To ſay nothing of the Royal Party who were powerful and growing,

growing, and who had full as good a right to claim to be the legitimate Government as any of the Pariſian Factions with whom he propoſed to treat—or rather (as it ſeemed to me) to ſurrender at diſcretion.

32. But when Mr. Fox began to come from his general hopes of the moderation of the Jacobins, to particulars, he put the caſe, that they might not perhaps be willing to ſurrender Savoy. He certainly was not willing to conteſt that point with them; but plainly and explicitly (as I underſtood him) propoſed to let them keep it; though he knew (or he was much worſe informed than he would be thought) that England had, at the very time, agreed on the terms of a Treaty with the King of Sardinia, of which the recovery of Savoy was the *Caſus Federis*. In the teeth of this Treaty, Mr. Fox propoſed a direct and moſt ſcandalous breach of our faith, formally and recently given. But to ſurrender Savoy, was to ſurrender a great deal more than ſo many ſquare acres of land, or ſo much revenue. In its conſequences, the ſurrender of Savoy, was to make a ſurrender to France of Switzerland and Italy, of both which countries,

countries, Savoy is the key—as it is known to ordinary ſpeculators in politicks, though it may not be known to the Weavers in Norwich, who, it ſeems are, by Mr. Fox, called to be the judges in this matter.

33. A ſure way indeed, to encourage France not to make a ſurrender of this key of Italy and Switzerland, or of Mayence, the key of Germany, or of any other object whatſoever which ſhe holds, is to let her ſee, *that the People of England raiſe a clamour againſt the War before terms are ſo much as propoſed on any ſide.* From that moment, the Jacobins would be maſters of the terms.—They would know, that Parliament, at all hazards, would force the King to a ſeparate Peace. The Crown could not, in that caſe, have any uſe of its judgment. Parliament could not poſſeſs more judgment than the Crown, when beſieged (as Mr. Fox propoſed to Mr. Gurney) by the cries of the Manufacturers. This deſcription of men, Mr. Fox endeavoured in his ſpeech, by every method, to irritate and inflame. In effect, his two ſpeeches were, through the whole, nothing more than an amplification of the Norwich Hand-

Hand-bill. He reſted the greateſt part of his argument on the diſtreſs of Trade, which he attributed to the war; though it was obvious, to any tolerably good obſervation, and much more muſt have been clear to ſuch an obſervation as his, that the then difficulties of the Trade and Manufacture could have no ſort of connection with our ſhare in it. The war had hardly begun. We had ſuffered neither by ſpoil, nor by defeat, nor by diſgrace of any kind. Public credit was ſo little impaired, that inſtead of being ſupported by any extraordinary aids from individuals, it advanced a credit to individuals to the amount of five millions, for the ſupport of Trade and Manufactures, under their temporary difficulties, a thing before never heard of;—a thing of which I do not commend the policy—but only ſtate it, to ſhew, that Mr. Fox's ideas of the effects of war were without any trace of foundation.

33. It is impoſſible not to correct the arguments and proceedings of a Party with that of its leader—eſpecially when not diſavowed or controlled by him. Mr. Fox's partizans declaim againſt all the powers of Europe, except

cept the Jacobins, juſt as he does; but not having the ſame reaſons for management and caution which he has, they ſpeak out. He ſatisfies himſelf merely with making his invectives, and leaves others to draw the concluſion. But they produce their Poliſh interpoſition, for the expreſs purpoſe of leading to a French alliance. They urge their French Peace, in order to make a junction with the Jacobins to oppoſe the powers, whom, in their language, they call Deſpots, and their leagues, a combination of Deſpots. Indeed, no man can look on the preſent poſture of Europe with the leaſt degree of diſcernment, who will not be thoroughly convinced, that England muſt be the faſt friend or the determined enemy of France. There is no medium; and I do not think Mr. Fox to be ſo dull as not to obſerve this. His Peace would have involved us inſtantly in the moſt extenſive and moſt ruinous wars; at the ſame time that it would have made a broad highway (acroſs which no human wiſdom could put an effectual barrier) for a mutual intercourſe with the fraternizing Jacobins on both ſides. The conſequences of which, thoſe will certainly not provide againſt, who do not dread or diſlike them.

34. It

34. It is not amiſs in this place to enter a little more fully into the ſpirit of the principal arguments on which Mr. Fox thought proper to reſt this his grand and concluding motion, particularly ſuch as were drawn from the internal ſtate of our affairs. Under a ſpecious appearance (not uncommonly put on by men of unſcrupulous ambition) that of tenderneſs and compaſſion to the Poor; he did his beſt to appeal to the judgments of the meaneſt and moſt ignorant of the people on the merits of the War. He had before done ſomething of the ſame dangerous kind in his printed Letter. The ground of a political War is of all things that which the poor labourer and manufacturer are the leaſt capable of conceiving. This ſort of people know in general that they muſt ſuffer by War. It is a matter to which they are ſufficiently competent, becauſe it is a matter of feeling. The *cauſes* of a war are not matters of feeling, but of reaſon and foreſight, and often of remote conſiderations, and of a very great combination of circumſtances, which *they* are utterly incapable of comprehending; and, indeed, it is not every man in the higheſt claſſes who is altogether equal to it. Nothing, in a general ſenſe, appears to me leſs fair and

juſtifiable, (even if no attempt were made to inflame the paſſions) than to ſubmit a matter on diſcuſſion to a Tribunal incapable of judging of more than *one ſide* of the queſtion. It is at leaſt as unjuſtifiable to inflame the paſſions of ſuch Judges againſt *that ſide*, in favor of which they cannot ſo much as comprehend the arguments. Before the prevalence of the French Syſtem (which as far as it has gone has extinguiſhed the ſalutary prejudice called our Country) nobody was more ſenſible of this important truth than Mr. Fox; and nothing was more proper and pertinent, or was more felt at the time, than his reprimand to Mr. Wilberforce for an inconſiderate expreſſion which tended to call in the judgment of the poor, to eſtimate the policy of war upon the ſtandard of the taxes they may be obliged to pay towards its ſupport.

35. It is fatally known, that the great Object of the Jacobin Syſtem is to excite the loweſt deſcription of the People to range themſelves under ambitious men, for the pillage and deſtruction of the more eminent orders and claſſes of the community. The thing, therefore, that a man not fanatically attached

tached to that dreadful project, would moſt ſtudiouſly avoid, is, to act a part with the French *Propagandiſts*, in attributing (as they conſtantly do) all Wars and all the conſequences of Wars, to the pride of thoſe orders, and to their contempt of the weak and indigent part of the ſociety. The ruling Jacobins inſiſt upon it, that even the Wars which they carry on with ſo much obſtinacy againſt all Nations, are made to prevent the Poor from any longer being the inſtruments and victims of Kings, Nobles, and the Ariſtocracy of Burghers and Rich Men. They pretend that the deſtruction of Kings, Nobles, and the Ariſtocracy of Burghers and Rich Men, is the only means of eſtabliſhing an univerſal and perpetual Peace. This is the great drift of all their writings from the time of the meeting of the States of France, in 1789, to the publication of the laſt Morning Chronicle. They inſiſt that even the War which, with ſo much boldneſs, they have declared againſt all Nations, is to prevent the poor from becoming the Inſtruments and Victims of theſe perſons and deſcriptions. It is but too eaſy, if you once teach poor labourers and mechanics to defy their prejudices, and as this

has been done with an induſtry ſcarcely credible, to ſubſtitute the principles of fraternity in the room of that ſalutary prejudice called our Country; it is, I ſay, but too eaſy to purſuade them agreeably to what Mr. Fox hints in his public Letter, that this War is, and that the other Wars have been, the Wars of Kings; it is eaſy to perſuade them that the terrors even of a foreign conqueſt are not terrors for *them*—It is eaſy to perſuade them that, for their part, *they* have nothing to loſe; and that their condition is not likely to be altered for the worſe, whatever party may happen to prevail in the War. Under any circumſtances this doctrine is highly dangerous, as it tends to make ſeparate parties of the higher and lower orders, and to put their intereſts on a different bottom. But if the enemy you have to deal with ſhould appear, as France now appears, under the very name and title of the deliverer of the poor, and the chaſtiſer of the rich, the former claſs would readily become, not an indifferent ſpectator of the War, but would be ready to enliſt in the faction of the enemy; which they would conſider, though under a foreign name, to be more connected with them than an adverſe

deſcrip-

deſcription in the ſame land. All the props of Society would be drawn from us by theſe doctrines, and the very foundations of the publick defence would give way in an inſtant.

36. There is no point which the Faction of Fraternity in England have laboured more than to excite in the Poor the horror of any War with France upon any occaſion. When they found that their open attacks upon our Conſtitution in favor of a French Republick were for the preſent repelled—they put that matter out of ſight, and have taken up the more plauſible and popular ground of general peace, upon merely general principles; although theſe very men, in the correſpondence of their clubs with thoſe of France, had reprobated the neutrality which now they ſo earneſtly preſs. But, in reality, their maxim was and is "Peace and Alliance with France, and War with the reſt of the World."

37. This laſt motion of Mr. Fox bound up the whole of his politics during the ſeſſion. This motion had many circumſtances, particularly in the Norwich Correſpondence, by which the miſchief of all the others, was ag-

gravated beyond meaſure. Yet, this laſt motion, far the worſt of Mr. Fox's proceedings, was the beſt ſupported of any of them, except his amendment to the Addreſs. The Duke of Portland had directly engaged to ſupport the War—Here was a motion as directly made to force the Crown to put an end to it before a blow had been ſtruck. The efforts of the Faction have ſo prevailed that ſome of his Grace's neareſt friends have actually voted for that motion: ſome, after ſhewing themſelves, went away, others did not appear at all. So it muſt be where a man is for any time ſupported from perſonal conſiderations, without reference to his public conduct. Through the whole of this buſineſs, the ſpirit of fraternity appears to me to have been the governing principle. It might be ſhameful for any man, above the vulgar, to ſhew ſo blind a partiality even to his own Country, as Mr. Fox appears, on all occaſions, this Seſſion, to have ſhewn to France. Had Mr. Fox been a Miniſter, and proceeded on the principles laid down by him, I believe there is little doubt he would have been conſidered as the moſt criminal Stateſman that ever lived in this Country. I do not know why a Stateſman

man out of place is not to be judged in the ſame manner, unleſs we can excuſe him by pleading in his favor a total indifference to principle; and that he would act and think in quite a different way if he were in office. This I will not ſuppoſe. One may think better of him; and that in caſe of his power he might change his mind. But ſuppoſing, that from better or from worſe motives, he might change his mind on his acquiſition of the favor of the Crown, I ſeriouſly fear that if the King ſhould to-morrow put power into his hands, and that his good genius would inſpire him with maxims very different from thoſe he has promulgated, he would not be able to get the better of the ill temper, and the ill doctrines he has been the means of exciting and propagating throughout the kingdom. From the very beginning of their inhuman and unprovoked rebellion and tyrannick uſurpation, he has covered the predominant Faction in France, and their adherents here, with the moſt exaggerated panegyricks; neither has he miſſed a ſingle opportunity of abuſing and vilifying thoſe, who in uniform concurrence with the Duke of Portland's and Lord Fitzwilliam's opinion, have maintained the

true

true grounds of the Revolution Settlement in 1688. He lamented all the defeats of the French; he rejoiced in all their victories; even when theſe victories threatened to overwhelm the Continent of Europe, and by facilitating their means of penetrating into Holland, to bring this moſt dreadful of all evils with irreſiſtible force to the very doors, if not into the very heart, of our Country. To this hour he always ſpeaks of every thought of overturning the French Jacobiniſm by force, on the part of any Power whatſoever, as an attempt unjuſt and cruel, and which he reprobates with horror. If any of the French Jacobin leaders are ſpoken of with hatred or ſcorn, he falls upon thoſe who take that liberty, with all the zeal and warmth with which men of honour defend their particular and boſom friends, when attacked. He always repreſents their cauſe as a cauſe of Liberty; and all who oppoſe it as partizans of deſpotiſm. He obſtinately continues to conſider the great and growing vices, crimes and diſorders of that country, as only evils of paſſage, which are to produce a permanently happy ſtate of order and freedom. He repreſents theſe diſorders exactly in the ſame way, and with the

ſame limitations which are uſed by one of the two great Jacobin Factions, I mean that of Petion and Briſſot. Like them he ſtudiouſly confines his horror and reprobation only to the maſſacres of the ſecond of September, and paſſes by thoſe of the 10th of Auguſt, as well as the impriſonment and depoſition of the King, which were the conſequences of that day, as indeed were the maſſacres themſelves to which he confines his cenſure, though they were not actually perpetrated till early in September. Like that Faction, he condemns, not the depoſition, or the propoſed exile, or perpetual impriſonment, but only the murder of the King. Mr. Sheridan, on every occaſion, palliates all their maſſacres committed in every part of France, as the effects of a natural indignation at the exorbitances of deſpotiſm, and of the dread of the people of returning under that yoke—He has thus taken occaſion to load, not the actors in this wickedneſs, but the Government of a mild, merciful, beneficent and patriotick Prince, and his ſuffering, faithful ſubjects, with all the crimes of the new anarchical tyranny, under which the one has been murdered, and the others are oppreſſed. Thoſe continual either praiſes or

palliating apologies of every thing done in France, and thoſe invectives as uniformly vomited out upon all thoſe who venture to expreſs their diſapprobation of ſuch proceedings, coming from a man of Mr. Fox's fame and authority, and one who is conſidered as the perſon to whom a great party of the wealthieſt men of the Kingdom look up, have been the cauſe why the principle of French fraternity formerly gained the ground which at one time it had obtained in this Country. It will infallibly recover itſelf again, and in ten times a greater degree, if the kind of Peace, in the manner which he preaches, ever ſhall be eſtabliſhed with the reigning faction in France.

38. So far as to the French practices with regard to France, and the other Powers of Europe---as to their principles and doctrines, with regard to the Conſtitution of States, Mr. Fox ſtudiouſly, on all occaſions, and indeed when no occaſion calls for it, (as on the Debate of the petition for Reform) brings forward and aſſerts their fundamental and fatal principle, pregnant with every miſchief and every crime, namely, that " in every Country the People is the legiti- " mate Sovereign;" exactly conformable to the Decla-

Declaration of the French Clubs and Legiſlators,—" La Souveraineté eſt *une, indiviſible, inalienable,* " *et impreſcriptible*:—Elle appartient a la Na- " tion:—Aucune *Section* du peuple, ni aucun " *Individu* ne peut s'en attribuer l'exerciſe." This confounds, in a manner equally miſchievous and ſtupid, the origin of a Government from the people with its continuance in their hands. I believe, that no ſuch doctrine has ever been heard of in any publick act of any Government whatſoever, until it was adopted (I think from the writings of Rouſſeau) by the French Aſſemblies, who have made it the baſis of their Conſtitution at home, and of the matter of their apoſtolate in every country. Theſe, and other wild declarations of abſtract principle, Mr. Fox ſays, are in themſelves perfectly right and true; though in ſome caſes he allows the French draw abſurd conſequences from them. But I conceive he is miſtaken. The conſequences are moſt logically, though moſt miſchievouſly drawn from the premiſes and principles by that wicked and ungracious faction. The fault is in the foundation.

39. Before ſociety, in a multitude of men, it is obvious, that ſovereignty and ſubjection are

ideas which cannot exiſt. It is the compact on which ſociety is formed that makes both. But to ſuppoſe the people, contrary to their compacts, both to give away and retain the ſame thing, is altogether abſurd. It is worſe, for it ſuppoſes in any ſtrong combination of men a power and right of always diſſolving the ſocial union; which power, however, if it exiſts, renders them again as little ſovereigns as ſubjects, but a mere unconnected multitude. It is not eaſy to ſtate for what good end, at a time like this, when the foundations of all antient and preſcriptive Governments, ſuch as ours (to which people ſubmit, not becauſe they have choſen them, but becauſe they are born to them) are undermined by perilous theories, that Mr. Fox ſhould be ſo fond of referring to thoſe theories, upon all occaſions, even though ſpeculatively they might be true, which God forbid they ſhould! Particularly I do not ſee the reaſon why he ſhould be ſo fond of declaring, that the principles of the Revolution have made the Crown of Great Britain *elective*; why he thinks it ſeaſonable to preach up with ſo much earneſtneſs, for now three years together, the doctrine of reſiſtance and Revolution at all; or to aſſert that our laſt Revolution of 1688 ſtands on the

ſame

ſame or ſimilar principles with that of France. We are not called upon to bring forward theſe doctrines, which are hardly ever reſorted to but in caſes of extremity, and where they are followed by correſpondent actions. We are not called upon by any circumſtance, that I know of, which can juſtify a revolt, or which demands a Revolution, or can make an election of a ſucceſſor to the Crown neceſſary, whatever latent right may be ſuppoſed to exiſt for effectuating any of theſe purpoſes.

40. Not the leaſt alarming of the proceedings of Mr. Fox and his friends in this Seſſion, eſpecially taken in concurrence with their whole proceedings, with regard to France and its principles, is their eagerneſs at this Seaſon, under pretence of Parliamentary Reforms (a project which had been for ſome time rather dormant) to diſcredit and diſgrace the Houſe of Commons. For this purpoſe theſe Gentlemen had found a way to inſult the Houſe by ſeveral atrocious libels in the form of petitions. In particular they brought up a libel, or rather a complete digeſt of libellous matter, from the Club called the Friends of the People. It is indeed at once the moſt audacious and the moſt

inſidious of all the performances of that kind which have yet appeared. It is ſaid to be the penmanſhip of Mr. Tierney, to bring whom into Parliament the Duke of Portland formerly had taken a good deal of pains, and expended, as I hear, a conſiderable ſum of money.

41. Among the circumſtances of danger from that piece, and from its precedent, it is obſervable that this is the firſt petition (if I remember right) *coming from a Club or Aſſociation, ſigned by Individuals, denoting neither local reſidence, nor corporate capacity.* This mode of petition not being ſtrictly illegal or informal, though in its ſpirit in the higheſt degree miſchievous, may and will lead to other things of that nature, tending to bring theſe Clubs and Aſſociations to the French model, and to make them in the end anſwer French purpoſes: I mean, that without legal names, theſe Clubs will be led to aſſume political capacities; that they may debate the forms of Conſtitution; and that from their Meetings they may inſolently dictate their will to the regular authorities of the Kingdom, in the manner in which the Jacobin Clubs iſſue their mandates to the National Aſſembly, or the National Convention. The audacious

dacious remonſtrance, I obſerve, is ſigned by all of that Aſſociation (the Friends of the People) *who are not in Parliament*, and it was ſupported moſt ſtrenuouſly by all the Aſſociators *who are Members*, with Mr. Fox at their head. He and they contended for referring this libel to a committee. Upon the queſtion of that reference, they grounded all their debate for a change in the Conſtitution of Parliament. The pretended Petition is, in fact, a regular charge or impeachment of the Houſe of Commons, digeſted into a number of Articles. This plan of reform is not a criminal Impeachment, but a matter of prudence, to be ſubmitted to the publick wiſdom, which muſt be as well appriſed of the facts as petitioners can be. But thoſe accuſers of the Houſe of Commons have proceeded upon the principles of a criminal proceſs; and have had the effrontery to offer proof on each Article.

42. This charge, the party of Mr. Fox maintained article by article, beginning with the firſt; namely, the interference of Peers at Elections, and their nominating in effect ſeveral of the Members of the Houſe of Commons. In the printed liſt of grievances which they made out

out on the occaſion, and in ſupport of their charge, is found the Borough, for which, under Lord Fitzwilliams' influence, I now ſit. By this Remonſtrance, and its object, they hope to defeat the operation of property in Elections, and in reality to diſſolve the connexion and communication of intereſts which makes the Houſes of Parliament a mutual ſupport to each other. Mr. Fox and the Friends of the People are not ſo ignorant as not to know, that Peers do not interfere in Elections as Peers, but as men of property.—They well know that the Houſe of Lords is by itſelf the feebleſt part of the Conſtitution; they know that the Houſe of Lords is ſupported only by its connexions with the Crown, and with the Houſe of Commons; and that without this double connexion the Lords could not exiſt a ſingle year. They know, that all theſe parts of our Conſtitution, whilſt they are balanced as oppoſing intereſts, are alſo connected as friends; otherwiſe nothing but confuſion could be the reſult of ſuch a complex Conſtitution. It is natural, therefore, that they who wiſh the common deſtruction of the whole, and of all its parts, ſhould contend for their total ſeparation. But as the Houſe of Commons is that link which connects both the

other

other parts of the Conſtitution (the Crown and the Lords) *with the Maſs of the People*, it is to that link (as it is natural enough) that their inceſſant attacks are directed. That artificial repreſentation of the people being once diſcredited and overturned, all goes to pieces, and nothing but a plain *French* democracy or arbitrary monarchy can poſſibly exiſt.

43. Some of theſe gentlemen who have attacked the Houſe of Commons, lean to a repreſentation of the people by the head, that is, to *individual repreſentation*. None of them that I recollect, except Mr. Fox, directly rejected it. It is remarkable, however, that he only rejected it by ſimply declaring an opinion. He let all the argument go againſt his opinion. All the proceedings and arguments of his reforming friends lead to individual repreſentation and to nothing elſe. It deſerves to be attentively obſerved, *that this individual repreſentation is the only plan of their reform, which has been explicitly propoſed.* In the mean time, the conduct of Mr. Fox appears to be far more inexplicable, on any good ground, than theirs, who pro-

poſe the individual repreſentation; for he neither propoſes any thing, nor even ſuggeſts that he has any thing to propoſe, in lieu of the preſent mode of conſtituting the Houſe of Commons. On the contrary, he declares againſt all the plans which have yet been ſuggeſted, either from himſelf or others: yet, thus unprovided with any plan whatſoever, he preſſed forward this unknown reform with all poſſible warmth; and for that purpoſe, in a ſpeech of ſeveral hours, he urged the referring to a committee, the libellous impeachment of the Houſe of Commons by the aſſociation of the Friends of the People. But for Mr. Fox to diſcredit Parliament *as it ſtands*, to countenance leagues, covenants, and aſſociations for its further diſcredit, to render it perfectly odious and contemptible, and at the ſame time to propoſe nothing at all in place of what he diſgraces, is worſe, if poſſible, than to contend for perſonal individual repreſentation, and is little leſs than demanding, in plain terms, to bring on plain anarchy.

44. Mr. Fox and theſe gentlemen have, for the preſent, been defeated; but they are neither

neither converted nor diſheartened. They have ſolemnly declared, that they will perſevere until they ſhall have obtained their ends; perſiſting to aſſert, that the Houſe of Commons not only is not the true repreſentative of the people, but that it does not anſwer the purpoſe of ſuch repreſentation; moſt of them inſiſt that all the debts, the taxes, and the burthens of all kinds on the people, with every other evil and inconvenience, which we have ſuffered ſince the Revolution, have been owing ſolely to an Houſe of Commons which does not ſpeak the ſenſe of the people.

45. It is alſo not to be forgotten, that Mr. Fox, and all who hold with him, on this, as on all other occaſions of pretended Reform, moſt bitterly reproach Mr. Pitt with treachery, in declining to ſupport the ſcandalous charges and indefinite projects of this infamous libel from the Friends of the People. By the animoſity with which they perſecute all thoſe who grow cold in this cauſe of pretended Reform, they hope, that if through levity, inexperience, or ambition, any young perſon (like Mr. Pitt, for

 inſtance)

inſtance) happens to be once embarked in their deſign, they ſhall, by a falſe ſhame, keep him faſt in it for ever. Many they have ſo hampered.

46. I know it is uſual, when the peril and alarm of the hour appears to be a little over-blown, to think no more of the matter. But for my part, I look back with horror on what we have eſcaped; and am full of anxiety with regard to the dangers, which, in my opinion, are ſtill to be apprehended both at home and abroad. This buſineſs has caſt deep roots. Whether it is neceſſarily connected in theory with Jacobiniſm is not worth a diſpute: The two things are connected in fact. The partizans of the one are the partizans of the other. I know it is common with thoſe who are favourable to the Gentlemen of Mr. Fox's party, and to their leader, though not at all devoted to all their reforming projects, or their Gallican politics, to argue in palliation of their conduct, that it is not in their power to do all the harm which their actions evidently tend to. It is ſaid, that as the people will not ſupport them, they may ſafely be indulged in thoſe

thoſe eccentric fancies of Reform, and thoſe theories which lead to nothing. This apology is not very much to the honour of thoſe politicians, whoſe intereſts are to be adhered to in defiance of their conduct. I cannot flatter myſelf that theſe inceſſant attacks on the Conſtitution of Parliament are ſafe. It is not in my power to deſpiſe the unceaſing efforts of a Confederacy of about fifty perſons of eminence; men, for the far greater part, of very ample fortunes either in poſſeſſion or in expectancy; men of decided characters and vehement paſſions, men of very great talents of all kinds; of much boldneſs, and of the greateſt poſſible ſpirit of artifice, intrigue, adventure, and enterprize, all operating with unwearied activity and perſeverance. Theſe gentlemen, are much ſtronger too without doors than ſome calculate. They have the more active part of the diſſenters with them; and the whole clan of ſpeculators of all denominations—a large and growing ſpecies. They have that floating multitude which goes with events and which ſuffers the loſs or gain of a battle, to decide it's opinions of right and wrong. As long as by every art this party keeps alive

alive a ſpirit of diſaffection againſt the very Conſtitution of the kingdom, and attributes, as lately it has been in the habit of doing, all the public misfortunes to that Conſtitution, it is abſolutely *impoſſible*, but that ſome moment muſt arrive, in which they will be enabled to produce a pretended Reform and a real Revolution. If ever the body of this *compound Conſtitution* of ours is ſubverted either in favour of unlimited Monarchy, or of wild Democracy, that ruin will *moſt certainly* be the reſult of this very ſort of machinations againſt the Houſe of Commons. It is not, from a confidence in the views or intentions of any Stateſman, that I think he is to be indulged in theſe perilous amuſements.

47. Before it is made the great object of any man's political life to raiſe another to power, it is right to conſider what are the real diſpoſitions of the perſon to be ſo elevated. We are not to form our judgment on theſe diſpoſitions from the rules and principles of a court of Juſtice, but from thoſe of private diſcretion; not looking for what would ſerve to criminate another, but what

what is ſufficient to direct ourſelves. By a compariſon of a ſeries of the diſcourſes and actions of certain men, for a reaſonable length of time, it is impoſſible not to obtain ſufficient indication of the general tendency of their views and principles. There is no other rational mode of proceeding. It is true, that in ſome one or two, perhaps not well-weighed expreſſions, or ſome one or two unconnected and doubtful affairs, we may and ought to judge of the actions or words by our previous good or ill opinion of the man. But this allowance has its bounds. It does not extend to any regular courſe of ſyſtematick action, or of conſtant and repeated diſcourſe. It is againſt every principle of common ſenſe and of juſtice to oneſelf, and to the public, to judge of a ſeries of ſpeeches and actions from the man, and not of the man from the whole tenor of his language and conduct. I have ſtated the above matters, not as inferring a criminal charge of evil intention. If I had meant to do ſo, perhaps they are ſtated with tolerable exactneſs—But I have no ſuch view. The intentions of theſe Gentlemen may be very pure. I do not diſpute it.

But

But I think they are in ſome great errour. If theſe things are done by Mr. Fox and his friends, with good intentions, they are not done leſs dangerouſly; for it ſhews theſe good intentions are not under the direction of ſafe maxims and principles.

48. Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan, and the Gentlemen who call themſelves the phalanx, have not been ſo very indulgent to others. They have thought proper to aſcribe to thoſe Members of the Houſe of Commons, who, in exact agreement with the Duke of Portland and Lord Fitzwilliam, abhor and oppoſe the French ſyſtem, the baſeſt and moſt unworthy motives for their conduct;—as if none could oppoſe that atheiſtick, immoral, and impolitick project ſet up in France, ſo diſgraceful and deſtructive, as I conceive, to human nature itſelf, but with ſome ſiniſter intentions. They treat thoſe Members on all occaſions with a ſort of lordly inſolence, though they are perſons that (whatever homage they may pay to the eloquence of the Gentlemen who chuſe to look down upon them with ſcorn), are not their inferiors in any particular which calls for and obtains juſt conſideration from the

public; not their inferiors in knowledge of public law, or of the Conſtitution of the kingdom; not their inferiors in their acquaintance with its foreign and domeſtic intereſts; not their inferiors in experience or practice of buſineſs; not their inferiors in moral character; not their inferiors in the proofs they have given of zeal and induſtry in the ſervice of their country. Without denying to theſe Gentlemen, the reſpect and conſideration which, it is allowed, juſtly belongs to them, we ſee no reaſon why they ſhould not as well be obliged to defer ſomething to our opinions, as that we ſhould be bound blindly and ſervilely to follow thoſe of Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Grey, Mr. Courtney, Mr. Lambton, Mr. Whitbread, Mr. Francis, Mr. Taylor, and others. We are Members of Parliament and their equals. We never conſider ourſelves as their followers. Theſe Gentlemen (ſome of them hardly born, when ſome of us came into Parliament) have thought proper to treat us as deſerters, as if we had been liſted into their phalanx like ſoldiers, and had ſworn to live and die in their French principles. This inſolent claim of ſuperiority on their part, and of a ſort of vaſſalage to them

on that of other Members, is what no liberal mind will ſubmit to bear.

49. The Society of the Liberty of the Preſs, the Whig Club, and the Society for Conſtitutional Information, and (I believe) the Friends of the People, as well as ſome Clubs in Scotland, have indeed declared, "That "their confidence in and attachment to Mr. "Fox, has lately been confirmed, ſtrengthened, and encreaſed by the calumnies (as "they are called) againſt him." It is true, Mr. Fox and his friends have thoſe teſtimonies in their favour, againſt certain old friends of the Duke of Portland. Yet on a full, ſerious, and I think diſpaſſionate conſideration of the whole of what Mr. Fox and Mr. Sheridan and their friends have acted, ſaid and written, in this Seſſion, inſtead of doing any thing which might tend to procure power, or any ſhare of it whatſoever, to them or to their phalanx (as they call it) or to encreaſe their credit, influence, or popularity in the nation, I think it one of my moſt ſerious and important public duties, in whatſoever ſtation I may be placed for the ſhort time I have to live, effectually to employ my beſt endeavours, by every

every prudent and every lawful means, to traverſe all their deſigns. I have only to lament, that my abilities are not greater, and that my probability of life is not better, for the more effectual purſuit of that object. But I truſt that neither the principles nor exertions will die with me. I am the rather confirmed in this my reſolution, and in this my wiſh of tranſmitting it, becauſe every ray of hope concerning a poſſible controul or mitigation of the enormous miſchiefs which the principles of theſe Gentlemen, and which their connexions full as dangerous as their principles, might receive from the influence of the Duke of Portland and Lord Fitzwilliam, on becoming their colleagues in office, is now entirely baniſhed from the mind of every one living.—It is apparent, even to the world at large, that ſo far from having a power to direct or to guide Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Grey, and the reſt, in any important matter, they have not, through this Seſſion, been able to prevail on them to forbear or to delay, or mitigate, or ſoften any one act, or any one expreſſion upon ſubjects on which they eſſentially differed.

50. Even if this hope of a poſſible controul did exiſt, yet the declared opinions and the uniform line of conduct conformable to thoſe opinions, purſued by Mr. Fox, muſt become a matter of ſerious alarm if he ſhould obtain a power either at Court or in Parliament, or in the nation at large; and for this plain reaſon—He muſt be the moſt active and efficient member in any Adminiſtration of which he ſhall form a part. That a man, or ſet of men, are guided by ſuch not dubious, but delivered and avowed principles and maxims of policy as to need a watch and check on them, in the exerciſe of the higheſt power, ought, in my opinion, to make every man, who is not of the ſame principles, and guided by the ſame maxims, a little cautious how he makes himſelf one of the traverſes of a ladder, to help ſuch a man or ſuch a ſet of men, to climb up to the higheſt authority. A miniſter of this country is to be controulled by the Houſe of Commons. He is to be truſted, not *controulled*, by his colleagues in office; if he were to be controulled, Government, which ought to be the ſource of order, would itſelf become a ſcene of anarchy. Beſides, Mr. Fox is a man of an aſpiring and commanding

mind, made rather to controul, than to be controulled, and he never will be, nor can be, in any Adminiſtration, in which he will be guided by any of thoſe whom I have been accuſtomed to confide in. It is abſurd to think that he would or could. If his own opinions do not controul him, nothing can. When we conſider of an adherence to a man which leads to his power, we muſt not only ſee what the man is, but how he ſtands related. It is not to be forgotten that Mr. Fox acts in cloſe and inſeparable connection with another Gentleman of exactly the ſame deſcription as himſelf, and who, perhaps, of the two is the leader. The reſt of the body are not a great deal more tractable; and over them if Mr. Fox and Mr. Sheridan have authority, moſt aſſuredly the Duke of Portland has not the ſmalleſt degree of influence.

51. One muſt take care, that a blind partiality to ſome perſons, and as blind an hatred to others, may not enter into our minds under a colour of inflexible publick principle. We hear, as a reaſon for clinging to Mr. Fox at preſent, that nine years ago

ago Mr. Pitt got into power by miſchievous intrigues with the Court, with the Diſſenters, and with other factious people out of Parliament, to the diſcredit and weakening of the power of the Houſe of Commons. His conduct nine years ago I ſtill hold to be very culpable. There are, however, many things very culpable that I do not know how to puniſh. My opinion, on ſuch matters, I muſt ſubmit to the good of the ſtate, as I have done on other occaſions; and particularly with regard to the authors and managers of the American war, with whom I have acted, both in office and in oppoſition, with great confidence and cordiality, though I thought many of their acts criminal and impeachable. Whilſt the miſconduct of Mr. Pitt and his aſſociates was yet recent, it was not poſſible to get Mr. Fox of himſelf to take a ſingle ſtep, or even to countenance others in taking any ſtep upon the ground of that miſconduct and falſe policy, though if the matters had been then taken up and purſued, ſuch a ſtep could not have appeared ſo evidently deſperate as now it is.—So far from purſuing Mr. Pitt, I know that then, and for ſome time after, ſome of Mr. Fox's

Fox's friends were actually, and with no ſmall earneſtneſs, looking out to a coalition with that gentleman. For years I never heard this circumſtance of Mr. Pitt's miſconduct on that occaſion mentioned by Mr. Fox, either in publick or in private, as a ground for oppoſition to that miniſter. All oppoſition, from that period to this very Seſſion, has proceeded upon the ſeparate meaſures as they ſeparately aroſe, without any vindictive retroſpect to Mr. Pitt's conduct in 1784. My memory, however, may fail me. I muſt appeal to the printed debates, which, (ſo far as Mr. Fox is concerned) are unuſually accurate.

52. Whatever might have been in our power, at an early period, at this day I ſee no remedy for what was done in 1784. I had no great hopes even at the time. I was therefore very eager to record a remonſtrance on the journals of the Houſe of Commons, as a caution againſt ſuch a popular deluſion in times to come; and this I then feared, and now am certain, is all that could be done. I know of no way of animadverting on the Crown. I know of no mode of calling

to

to account the Houſe of Lords, who threw out the India Bill, in a way not much to their credit. As little, or rather leſs, am I able to coerce the people at large, who behaved very unwiſely and intemperately on that occaſion. Mr. Pitt was then accuſed, by me as well as others, of attempting to be Miniſter, without enjoying the confidence of the Houſe of Commons, though he did enjoy the confidence of the Crown. That Houſe of Commons, whoſe confidence he did not enjoy, unfortunately did not itſelf enjoy the confidence, (though we well deſerved it) either of the Crown or of the public. For want of that confidence, the then Houſe of Commons did not ſurvive the conteſt. Since that period Mr. Pitt has enjoyed the confidence of the Crown, and of the Lords, and *of the Houſe of Commons*, through two ſucceſſive Parliaments; and I ſuſpect that he has ever ſince, and that he does ſtill, enjoy as large a portion, at leaſt, of the confidence of the people without doors, as his great rival. Before whom, then, is Mr. Pitt to be impeached, and by whom? The more I conſider the matter, the more firmly I am convinced, that the idea

idea of proſcribing Mr. Pitt *indirectly*, when you cannot *directly puniſh* him, is as chimerical a project, and as unjuſtifiable, as it would be to have proſcribed Lord North. For ſuppoſing, that by indirect ways of oppoſition, by oppoſition upon meaſures which do not relate to the buſineſs of 1784, but which on other grounds might prove unpopular, you were to drive him from his ſeat, this would be no example whatever of puniſhment for the matters we charge as offences in 1784. On a cool and diſpaſſionate view of the affairs of this time and country, it appears obvious to me, that one or the other of thoſe two great men, that is, Mr. Pitt or Mr. Fox, muſt be Miniſter. They are, I am ſorry for it, irreconcileable. Mr. Fox's conduct *in this Seſſion* has rendered the idea of his power a matter of ſerious alarm to many people, who were very little pleaſed with the proceedings of Mr. Pitt in the beginning of his adminiſtration. They like neither the conduct of Mr. Pitt, in 1784, nor that of Mr. Fox, in 1793; but they eſtimate, which of the evils is moſt preſſing at the time, and what is likely to be the conſequence of a change. If Mr. Fox

be wedded, they muſt be ſenſible, that his opinions and principles, on the now exiſting ſtate of things at home and abroad, muſt be taken as his portion. In his train muſt alſo be taken the whole body of gentlemen, who are pledged to him and to each other, and to their common politicks and principles.—I believe no King of Great Britain ever will adopt for his confidential ſervants, that body of gentlemen, holding that body of principles. Even if the preſent King or his ſucceſſor ſhould think fit to take that ſtep, I apprehend a general diſcontent of thoſe, who wiſh that this nation and that Europe ſhould continue in their preſent ſtate, would enſue; a diſcontent, which, combined with the principles and progreſs of the new men in power, would ſhake this kingdom to its foundations. I do not believe any one political conjecture can be more certain than this.

53. Without at all defending or palliating Mr. Pitt's conduct in 1784, I muſt obſerve, that the criſis of 1793, with regard to every thing at home and abroad, is full as important as that of 1784 ever was; and, if

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for no other reaſon, by being preſent is much more important. It is not to nine years ago we are to look for the danger of Mr. Fox's and Mr. Sheridan's conduct, and that of the Gentlemen who act with them. It is at *this* very time, and in *this* very ſeſſion, that, if they had not been ſtrenuouſly reſiſted, they would not only merely have diſcredited the Houſe of Commons (as Mr. Pitt did in 1784, when he perſuaded the King to reject their advice, and to appeal from them to the people), but, in my opinion, would have been the means of wholly ſubverting the Houſe of Commons and the Houſe of Peers, and the whole Conſtitution actual and virtual, together with the ſafety and independence of this nation, and the peace and ſettlement of every State in the now Chriſtian world. It is to our opinion of the nature of Jacobiniſm, and of the probability by corruption, faction, and force, of its gaining ground every where, that the queſtion whom and what you are to ſupport is to be determined. For my part, without doubt or heſitation, I look upon Jacobiniſm, as the moſt dreadful, and the moſt ſhameful evil, which ever afflicted mankind, a

thing which goes beyond the power of all calculation in its miſchief; and that if it is ſuffered to exiſt in France, we muſt in England, and ſpeedily too, fall into that calamity.

54. I figure to myſelf the purpoſe of theſe Gentlemen accompliſhed, and this Miniſtry deſtroyed. I ſee that the perſons who in that caſe muſt rule, can be no other than Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Grey, the Marquis of Lanſdowne, Lord Thurlow, Lord Lauderdale, and the Duke of Norfolk, with the other Chiefs of the Friends of the People, the Parliamentary Reformers, and the Admirers of the French Revolution. The principal of theſe are all formally pledged to their projects. If the Duke of Portland and Lord Fitzwilliam ſhould be admitted into that ſyſtem (as they might and probably would be), it is quite certain they could not have the ſmalleſt weight in it; leſs, indeed, than what they now poſſeſs, if leſs were poſſible: becauſe they would be leſs wanted than they now are; and becauſe all thoſe who wiſhed to join them, and to act under them, have been rejected by the Duke of Portland and Lord Fitzwilliam themſelves;

and

and Mr. Fox, finding them thus by themſelves diſarmed, has built quite a new fabric, upon quite a new foundation. There is no trifling on this ſubject. We ſee very diſtinctly before us the Miniſtry that would be formed, and the plan that would be purſued. If we like the plan, we muſt wiſh the power of thoſe who are to carry it into execution; but to purſue the political exaltation of thoſe whoſe political meaſures we diſapprove, and whoſe principles we diſſent from, is a ſpecies of modern politicks not eaſily comprehenſible, and which muſt end in the ruin of the country, if it ſhould continue and ſpread. Mr. Pitt may be the worſt of men, and Mr. Fox may be the beſt; but, at preſent, the former is in the intereſt of his country, and of the order of things long eſtabliſhed in Europe: Mr. Fox is not. I have, for one, been born in this order of things, and would fain die in it. I am ſure it is ſufficient to make men as virtuous, as happy, and as knowing as any thing which Mr. Fox, and his friends abroad or at home, would ſubſtitute in its place; and I ſhould be ſorry that any ſet of politicians ſhould obtain power in England, whoſe principles or ſchemes ſhould lead them to countenance per-

ſons or factions whoſe object is to introduce ſome new deviſed order of things into England, or to ſupport that order where it is already introduced, in France; a place, in which if it can be fixed, in my mind, it muſt have a certain and decided influence in and upon this kingdom. This is my account of my conduct to my private friends. I have already ſaid all I wiſh to ſay, or nearly ſo, to the publick. I write this with pain, and with an heart full of grief!

LETTER

TO

******* *******, ESQUIRE.

OCCASIONED BY THE ACCOUNT GIVEN IN A NEWSPAPER OF THE

SPEECH

MADE IN

THE HOUSE OF LORDS,

BY THE

**** OF *******

IN THE DEBATE CONCERNING

LORD FITZWILLIAM,

1795.

LETTER, &c.

Beaconsfield, May 26, 1795.

MY DEAR SIR,

I HAVE been told of the voluntary, which, for the entertainment of the Houſe of Lords, has been lately played by His Grace the **** of *******, a great deal at my expence, and a little at his own. I confeſs I ſhould have liked the compoſition rather better, if it had been quite new. But every man has his taſte, and His Grace is an admirer of antient muſick.

There may be ſometimes too much even of a good thing. A toaſt is good, and a bumper is not bad: but the beſt toaſts may be ſo often repeated as to diſguſt the palate, and ceaſeleſs rounds of bumpers may nauſeate and overload the ſtomach. The ears of the moſt ſteady-voting politicians may at laſt be ſtunned with three times three. I am ſure I have been very grateful for the flattering remembrance made of me in the toaſts of the Revolution Society, and of other clubs formed on the ſame laudable plan. After giving the brim-

ming honours to Citizen Thomas Paine, and to Citizen Dr. Prieſtley, the gentlemen of theſe clubs ſeldom failed to bring me forth in my turn, and to drink, " Mr. Burke, and " thanks to him for the diſcuſſion he has provoked."

I found myſelf elevated with this honour; for even by the colliſion of reſiſtance, to be the means of ſtriking out ſparkles of truth, if not merit, is at leaſt felicity.

Here I might have reſted. But when I found that the great advocate, Mr. Erſkine, condeſcended to reſort to theſe bumper toaſts, as the pure and exuberant fountains of politicks and of rhetorick, (as I hear he did, in three or four ſpeeches made in defence of certain worthy citizens) I was rather let down a little. Though ſtill ſomewhat proud of myſelf, I was not quite ſo proud of my voucher. Though he is no idolater of fame, in ſome way or other, Mr. Erſkine will always do himſelf honour. Methinks, however, in following the precedents of theſe toaſts, he ſeemed to do more credit to his diligence, as a ſpecial pleader, than to his invention as an orator.

To thoſe who did not know the abundance of his reſources, both of genius and erudition, there was ſomething in it that indicated the want of a good aſſortment, with regard to richneſs and variety, in the magazine of topicks and common-places, which I ſuppoſe he keeps by him, in imitation of Cicero and other renowned declaimers of antiquity.

Mr. Erſkine ſupplied ſomething, I allow, from the ſtores of his imagination, in metamorphoſing the jovial toaſts of clubs, into ſolemn ſpecial arguments at the bar. So far the thing ſhewed talent: however I muſt ſtill prefer the bar of the tavern to the other bar. The toaſts at the firſt hand were better than the arguments at the ſecond. Even when the toaſts began to grow old as ſarcaſms, they were waſhed down with ſtill older pricked election port; then the acid of the wine made ſome amends for the want of any thing piquant in the wit. But when His Grace gave them a ſecond transformation, and brought out the vapid ſtuff, which had wearied the clubs and diſguſted the courts; the drug made up of the bottoms of rejected bottles, all ſmelling ſo woefully of the cork and of the caſk, and of

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every thing except the honeſt old lamp, and when that ſad draught had been farther infected with the gaol pollution of the Old Bailey, and was daſhed and brewed, and ineffectually ſtummed again into a ſenatorial exordium in the Houſe of Lords, I found all the high flavour and mantling of my honours, taſteleſs, flat, and ſtale. Unluckily, the new tax on wine is felt even in the greateſt fortunes, and His Grace ſubmits to take up with the heel-taps of Mr. Erſkine.

I have had the ill or good fortune to provoke two great men of this age to the publication of their opinions; I mean, Citizen Thomas Paine, and His Grace the **** of *******. I am not ſo great a leveller as to put theſe two great men on a par, either in the ſtate, or the republick of letters: but, "the "field of glory is a field for all." It is a large one indeed, and we all may run, God knows where, in chace of glory, over the boundleſs expanſe of that wild heath, whoſe horizon always flies before us. I aſſure His Grace (if he will yet give me leave to call him ſo) whatever may be ſaid on the authority of the clubs, or of the bar, that Citizen Paine (who,

(who, they will have it, hunts with me in couples, and who only moves as I drag him along), has a ſufficient activity in his own native benevolence to diſpoſe and enable him to take the lead for himſelf. He is ready to blaſpheme his God, to inſult his king, and to libel the conſtitution of his country, without any provocation from me, or any encouragement from His Grace. I aſſure him, that I ſhall not be guilty of the injuſtice of charging Mr. Paine's next work againſt religion and human ſociety, upon His Grace's excellent ſpeech in the Houſe of Lords. I farther aſſure this noble Duke, that I neither encouraged nor provoked that worthy citizen to ſeek for plenty, liberty, ſafety, juſtice or lenity, in the famine, in the priſons, in the decrees of convention, in the revolutionary tribunal, and in the guillotine of Paris, rather than quietly to take up with what he could find in the glutted markets, the unbarricadoed ſtreets, the drowſy Old Bailey judges, or, at worſt, the airy, wholeſome pillory of Old England. The choice of country was his own taſte. The writings were the effects of his own zeal. In ſpite of his friend Dr. Prieſtley, he was a free agent. I admit, indeed, that my praiſes of the Britiſh

government

government loaded with all its encumbrances; clogged with its peers and its beef; its parſons and its pudding; its Commons and its beer; and its dull ſlaviſh liberty of going about juſt as one pleaſes, had ſomething to provoke a Jockey of Norfolk *, who was inſpired with the reſolute ambition of becoming a citizen of France, to do ſomething which might render him worthy of naturalization in that grand aſylum of perſecuted merit: ſomething which ſhould intitle him to a place in the ſenate of the adoptive country of all the gallant, generous and humane. This, I ſay, was poſſible. But the truth is (with great deference to His Grace I ſay it) Citizen Paine acted without any provocation at all; he acted ſolely from the native impulſes of his own excellent heart.

His Grace, like an able orator, as he is, begins with giving me a great deal of praiſe for talents which I do not poſſeſs. He does this to intitle himſelf, on the credit of this gratuitous kindneſs, to exaggerate my abuſe of the parts which his bounty, and not that of nature has beſtowed upon me. In this, too,

* Mr. Paine is a Norfolk man, from Thetford.

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he has condeſcended to copy Mr. Erſkine. Theſe prieſts (I hope they will excuſe me; I mean prieſts of the Rights of Man) begin by crowning me with their flowers and their fillets, and bedewing me with their odours, as a preface to their knocking me on the head with their conſecrated axes. I have injured, ſay they, the Conſtitution; and I have abandoned the whig party and the whig principles that I profeſſed. I do not mean, my dear ſir, to defend myſelf againſt His Grace. I have not much intereſt in what the world ſhall think or ſay of me; as little has the world an intereſt in what I ſhall think or ſay of any one in it; and I wiſh that His Grace had ſuffered an unhappy man to enjoy, in his retreat, the melancholy privileges of obſcurity and ſorrow. At any rate, I have ſpoken, and I have written on the ſubject. If I have written or ſpoken ſo poorly as to be quite forgot, a freſh apology will not make a more laſting impreſſion. "I muſt let the tree lie "as it falls." Perhaps I muſt take ſome ſhame to myſelf. I confeſs that I have acted on my own principles of government, and not on thoſe of His Grace, which are, I dare ſay, profound and wiſe; but which I do not

pretend

pretend to underſtand. As to the party to which he alludes, and which has long taken its leave of me, I believe the principles of the book which he condemns, are very conformable to the opinions of many of the moſt conſiderable and moſt grave in that deſcription of politicians. A few indeed, who, I admit, are equally reſpectable in all points, differ from me, and talk His Grace's language. I am too feeble to contend with them. They have the field to themſelves. There are others very young and very ingenious perſons, who form, probably, the largeſt part of what His Grace, I believe, is pleaſed to conſider as that party. Some of them were not born into the world, and all of them were children, when I entered into that connexion. I give due credit to the cenſorial brow, to the broad phylacteries, and to the impoſing gravity of thoſe magiſterial rabbins and doctors in the cabala of political ſcience. I admit that " wiſdom " is as the grey hair to man, and that learning " is like honourable old age." But, at a time when liberty is a good deal talked of, perhaps I might be excuſed, if I caught ſomething of the general indocility. It might not be ſurpriſing, if I lengthened my chain a link or

two,

two, and in an age of relaxed diſcipline, gave a trifling indulgence to my own notions. If that could be allowed, perhaps I might ſometimes (by accident, and without an unpardonable crime) truſt as much to my own very careful and very laborious, though, perhaps, ſomewhat purblind diſquiſitions, as to their ſoaring, intuitive, eagle-eyed authority; but the modern liberty is a precious thing. It muſt not be profaned by too vulgar an uſe. It belongs only to the choſen few, who are born to the hereditary repreſentation of the whole democracy, and who leave nothing at all, no, not the offal, to us poor outcaſts of the plebeian race.

Amongſt thoſe gentlemen who came to authority, as ſoon, or ſooner than they came of age, I do not mean to include His Grace. With all thoſe native titles to empire over our minds which diſtinguiſh the others, he has a large ſhare of experience. He certainly ought to underſtand the Britiſh Conſtitution better than I do. He has ſtudied it in the fundamental part. For one election I have ſeen, he has been concerned in twenty. Nobody is leſs of a viſionary theoriſt; no-

body has drawn his ſpeculations more from practice. No Peer has condeſcended to ſuperintend with more vigilance the declining franchiſes of the poor Commons. " With " thrice great Hermes he has out-watched " the bear." Often have his candles been burned to the ſnuff, and glimmered and ſtunk in the ſockets, whilſt he grew pale at his conſtitutional ſtudies; long ſleepleſs nights has he waſted; long, laborious, ſhiftleſs journies has he made, and great ſums has he expended, in order to ſecure the purity, the independence, and the ſobriety of elections, and to give a check, if poſſible, to the ruinous charges that go nearly to the deſtruction of the right of election itſelf.

Amidſt theſe his labours, his Grace will be pleaſed to forgive me, if my zeal, leſs enlightened to be ſure than his by midnight lamps and ſtudies, has preſumed to talk too favourably of this Conſtitution, and even to ſay ſomething ſounding like approbation of that body which has the honour to reckon his Grace at the head of it. Thoſe who diſlike this partiality, or, if his Grace pleaſes, this flattery of mine, have a comfort at hand. I may be refuted

refuted and brought to ſhame by the moſt convincing of all refutations, a practical refutation. Every individual Peer for himſelf may ſhew that I was ridiculouſly wrong; the whole body of thoſe noble perſons may refute me for the whole corps. If they pleaſe, they are more powerful advocates againſt themſelves, than a thouſand ſcribblers like me can be in their favour. If I were even poſſeſſed of thoſe powers which his Grace, in order to heighten my offence, is pleaſed to attribute to me, there would be little difference. The eloquence of Mr. Erſkine might ſave Mr. *****, from the gallows, but no eloquence could ſave Mr. Jackſon from the effects of his own potion.

In that unfortunate book of mine, which is put in the *index expurgatorius* of the modern whigs, I might have ſpoken too favourably not only of thoſe who wear coronets, but of thoſe who wear crowns. Kings however have not only long arms, but ſtrong ones too. A great Northern Potentate for inſtance, is able in one moment, and with one bold ſtroke of his diplomatick pen, to efface all the volumes which I could write in a century, or which

the moſt laborious publiciſts of Germany ever carried to the fair of Leipſick, as an apology for monarchs and monarchy. Whilſt I, or any other poor puny private ſophiſt, was defending the declaration of Pilnitz, his Majeſty might refute me by the treaty of Bâſle. Such a monarch may deſtroy one republick becauſe it had a king at its head, and he may balance this extraordinary act by founding another republick that has cut off the head of its king. I defended that great Potentate for aſſociating in a grand alliance for the preſervation of the old governments of Europe; but he puts me to ſilence by delivering up all thoſe governments (his own virtually included) to the new ſyſtem of France. If he is accuſed before the Pariſian tribunal (conſtituted for the trial of kings) for having polluted the ſoil of liberty by the tracks of his diſciplined ſlaves, he clears himſelf by ſurrendering the fineſt parts of Germany (with a handſome cut of his own territories) to the offended majeſty of the regicides of France. Can I reſiſt this? Am I reſponſible for it, if with a torch in his hand, and a rope about his neck, he makes *amende honorable* to the *Sans-Culotterie* of the republick one and indiviſible? In that humiliating atti-

tude,

tude, in ſpite of my proteſts, he may ſupplicate pardon for his menacing proclamations; and as an expiation to thoſe whom he failed to terrify with his threats, he may abandon thoſe whom he had ſeduced by his promiſes. He may ſacrifice the Royaliſts of France whom he had called to his ſtandard, as a ſalutary example to thoſe who ſhall adhere to their native Sovereign, or ſhall confide in any other who undertakes the cauſe of oppreſſed kings and of loyal ſubjects.

How can I help it, if this high-minded Prince will ſubſcribe to the invectives which the regicides have made againſt all kings, and particularly againſt himſelf? How can I help it, if this Royal propagandiſt will preach the doctrine of the rights of men? Is it my fault, if his profeſſors of literature read lectures on that code in all his academies, and if all the penſioned managers of the news-papers in his dominions diffuſe it throughout Europe in an hundred journals? Can it be attributed to me, if he will initiate all his grenadiers, and all his huſſars in theſe high myſteries? Am I reſponſible, if he will make *le Droit de l'Homme*, or *la Souveraineté du Peuple* the favourite parole of his

his military orders? Now that his troops are to act with the brave legions of freedom, no doubt he will fit them for their fraternity. He will teach the Pruſſians to think, to feel and to act like them, and to emulate the glories of the *Regiment de l'Echaffaut.* He will employ the illuſtrious Citizen Santerre, the general of his new allies, to inſtruct the dull Germans how they ſhall conduct themſelves towards perſons who, like Louis the XVIth, (whoſe cauſe and perſon, he once took into his protection) ſhall dare without the ſanction of the people, or with it, to conſider themſelves as hereditary kings. Can I arreſt this great Potentate in his career of glory? Am I blameable in recommending virtue and religion as the true foundation of all monarchies, becauſe the Protector of the three religions of the Weſtphalian arrangement, to ingratiate himſelf with the Republick of Philoſophy, ſhall aboliſh all the three? It is not in my power to prevent the grand Patron of the reformed church, if he chuſes it, from annulling the Calviniſtick Sabbath, and eſtabliſhing the Decadi of Atheiſm in all his ſtates. He may even renounce and abjure his favourite myſticiſm in the temple of reaſon. In

theſe

theſe things, at leaſt, he is truly deſpotick. He has now ſhaken hands with every thing which at firſt had inſpired him with horrour. It would be curious indeed to ſee, (what I ſhall not however travel ſo far to ſee) the ingenious devices, and the elegant tranſparencies which on the reſtoration of peace and the commencement of Pruſſian liberty are to decorate Potzdam and Charlottenburg *feſtigiante*. What ſhades of his armed anceſtors of the Houſe of Brandenburgh will the Committee of *Illuminés* raiſe up in the opera-houſe of Berlin, to dance a grand ballet in the rejoicings for this auſpicious event? Is it a Grand Maſter of the Teutonick Order, or is it the great Elector? Is it the firſt King of Pruſſia or the laſt? or is the whole long line (long, I mean *a parte antè*) to appear like Banquo's royal proceſſion in the tragedy of Macbeth?

How can I prevent all theſe arts of Royal policy and all theſe diſplays of Royal magnificence? How can I prevent the Succeſſor of Frederick the Great from aſpiring to a new, and in this age unexampled kind of glory? Is it in my power to ſay, that he ſhall not make his confeſſions in the ſtyle of St. Auſtin

or of Rouſſeau? That he ſhall not aſſume the character of the penitent and flagellant, and grafting monkery on philoſophy, ſtrip himſelf of his regal purple, clothe his gigantick limbs in the ſackcloth and the *hair-ſhirt*, and exerciſe on his broad ſhoulders the diſciplinary ſcourge of the holy order of the *Sans-Culottes*? It is not in me to hinder Kings from making new orders of religious and martial knighthood. I am not Hercules enough to uphold thoſe orbs which the Atlaſſes of the world are ſo deſirous of ſhifting from their weary ſhoulders. What can be done againſt the magnanimous reſolution of the great to accompliſh the degradation and the ruin of their own character and ſituation?

What I ſay of the German Princes, that I ſay of all the other dignities and all the other inſtitutions of the Holy Roman Empire. If they have a mind to deſtroy themſelves, they may put their advocates to ſilence and their adviſers to ſhame. I have often praiſed the Aulick Council. It is very true I did ſo. I thought it a tribunal, as well formed as human wiſdom could form a tribunal, for coercing the great, the rich and the powerful; for

for obliging them to ſubmit their necks to the imperial laws, and to thoſe of nature and of nations; a tribunal well conceived for extirpating peculation, corruption and oppreſſion, from all the parts of that vaſt heterogeneous maſs called the Germanic Body. I ſhould not be inclined to retract theſe praiſes upon any of the ordinary lapſes into which human infirmity will fall; they might ſtill ſtand, though ſome of their *concluſions* ſhould taſte of the prejudices of country or of faction, whether political or religious. Some degree, even of corruption, ſhould not make me think them guilty of ſuicide; but if we could ſuppoſe, that the Aulick Council not regarding duty, or even common decorum, liſtening neither to the ſecret admonitions of conſcience, nor to the publick voice of fame, ſome of the members baſely abandoning their poſt, and others continuing in it, only the more infamouſly to betray it, ſhould give a judgment ſo ſhameleſs and ſo proſtitute, of ſuch monſtrous and even portentous corruption, that no example in the hiſtory of human depravity, or even in the fictions of poëtick imagination, could poſſibly match it; if it ſhould be a judgment which with cold un-

feeling cruelty, after long deliberations ſhould condemn millions of innocent people to extortion, to rapine and to blood, and ſhould devote ſome of the fineſt countries upon earth to ravage and deſolation—does any one think that any ſervile apologies of mine, or any ſtrutting and bullying inſolence of their own, can ſave them from the ruin that muſt fall on all inſtitutions of dignity or of authority that are perverted from their purport to the oppreſſion of human nature in others, and to its diſgrace in themſelves. As the wiſdom of men makes ſuch inſtitutions, the folly of men deſtroys them. Whatever we may pretend, there is always more in the ſoundneſs of the materials, than in the faſhion of the work. The order of a good building is ſomething. But if it be wholly declined from its perpendicular; if the cement is looſe and incoherent; if the ſtones are ſcaling with every change of the weather, and the whole toppling on our heads, what matter is it whether we are cruſhed by a Corinthian or a Dorick ruin? The fine form of a veſſel is a matter of uſe and of delight. It is pleaſant to ſee her decorated with coſt and art. But what ſignifies even the mathematical truth of her form?

What ſignify all the art and coſt with which ſhe can be carved, and painted, and gilded, and covered with decorations from ſtem to ſtern; what ſignify all her rigging and ſails, her flags, her pendants and her ſtreamers? what ſignify even her cannon, her ſtores and her proviſions, if all her planks and timbers be unſound and rotten?

Quamvis Pontica pinus
Silvæ filia nobilis
Facies & genus & nomen inutile.

I have been ſtimulated, I know not how, to give you this trouble by what very few, except myſelf, would think worth any trouble at all. In a ſpeech in the Houſe of Lords, I have been attacked for the defence of a ſcheme of government, in which that body inheres, and in which alone it can exiſt. Peers of Great Britain may become as penitent as the Sovereign of Pruſſia. They may repent of what they have done in aſſertion of the honour of their King, and in favour of their own ſafety. But never the gloom that lowers over the fortune of the cauſe, nor any thing which the great may do towards haſtening their own fall, can make

me repent of what I have done by pen or voice (the only arms I poſſeſs) in favour of the order of things into which I was born, and in which I fondly hoped to die.

In the long ſeries of ages which have furniſhed the matter of hiſtory, never was ſo beautiful and ſo auguſt a ſpectacle preſented to the moral eye, as Europe afforded the day before the revolution in France. I knew indeed that this proſperity contained in itſelf the ſeeds of its own danger. In one part of the ſociety it cauſed laxity and debility. In the other it produced bold ſpirits and dark deſigns. A falſe philoſophy paſſed from academies into courts, and the great themſelves were infected with the theories which conducted to their ruin. Knowledge which in the two laſt centuries either did not exiſt at all, or exiſted ſolidly on right principles and in choſen hands, was now diffuſed, weakened and perverted. General wealth looſened morals, relaxed vigilance, and increaſed preſumption. Men of talent began to compare, in the partition of the common ſtock of public proſperity, the proportions of the dividends, with the merits of the claimants. As uſual, they found their portion

portion not equal to their eſtimate (or perhaps to the public eſtimate) of their own worth. When it was once diſcovered by the revolution in France that a ſtruggle between eſtabliſhment and rapacity could be maintained, though but for one year, and in one place, I was ſure that a practicable breach was made in the whole order of things and in every country. Religion, that held the materials of the fabrick together, was firſt ſyſtematically looſened. All other opinions, under the name of prejudices, muſt fall along with it; and Property, left undefended by principles, became a repoſitory of ſpoils to tempt cupidity, and not a magazine to furniſh arms for defence. I knew, that attacked on all ſides by the infernal energies of talents ſet in action by vice and diſorder, authority could not ſtand upon authority alone. It wanted ſome other ſupport than the poiſe of its own gravity. Situations formerly ſupported perſons. It now became neceſſary that perſonal qualities ſhould ſupport ſituations. Formerly, where authority was found, wiſdom and virtue were preſumed. But now the veil was torn, and to keep off ſacrilegious intruſion, it was neceſſary that in the ſanctuary of government ſomething ſhould be diſcloſed

diſcloſed not only venerable, but dreadful. Government was at once to ſhew itſelf full of virtue and full of force. It was to invite partizans by making it appear to the world that a generous cauſe was to be aſſerted; one fit for a generous people to engage in. From paſſive ſubmiſſion was it to expect reſolute defence? No! It muſt have warm advocates and paſſionate defenders, which an heavy, diſcontented acquieſcence never could produce. What a baſe and fooliſh thing is it for any conſolidated body of authority to ſay, or to act as if it ſaid, "I will put my truſt not in my own virtue, but in your patience; I will indulge in effeminacy, in indolence, in corruption; I will give way to all my perverſe and vitious humours, becauſe you cannot puniſh me without the hazard of ruining yourſelves?"

I wiſhed to warn the people againſt the greateſt of all evils: a blind and furious ſpirit of innovation, under the name of reform. I was indeed well aware that power rarely reforms itſelf. So it is undoubtedly when all is quiet about it. But I was in hopes that provident fear might prevent fruitleſs penitence.

I truſted

I truſted that danger might produce at leaſt circumſpection; I flattered myſelf in a moment like this that nothing would be added to make authority top-heavy; that the very moment of an earth-quake would not be the time choſen for adding a ſtory to our houſes. I hoped to ſee the ſureſt of all reforms, perhaps the only ſure reform, the ceaſing to do ill. In the mean time I wiſhed to the people, the wiſdom of knowing how to tolerate a condition which none of their efforts can render much more than tolerable. It was a condition, however, in which every thing was to be found that could enable them to live to nature, and if ſo they pleaſed, to live to virtue and to honour.

I do not repent that I thought better of thoſe to whom I wiſhed well, than they will ſuffer me long to think that they deſerved. Far from repenting, I would to God, that new faculties had been called up in me, in favour not of this or that man, or this or that ſyſtem, but of the general vital principle that whilſt it was in its vigour produced the ſtate of things tranſmitted to us from our fathers; but which, through the joint operation of the

abuſes

abuſes of authority and liberty, may periſh in our hands. I am not of opinion that the race of men, and the commonwealths they create, like the bodies of individuals, grow effete and languid and bloodleſs, and oſſify by the neceſſities of their own conformation, and the fatal operation of longevity and time. Theſe analogies between bodies natural and politick, though they may ſome times illuſtrate arguments, furniſh no argument of themſelves. They are but too often uſed under the colour of a ſpecious philoſophy, to find apologies for the deſpair of lazineſs and puſillanimity, and to excuſe the want of all manly efforts, when the exigencies of our country call for them the more loudly.

How often has public calamity been arreſted on the very brink of ruin by the ſeaſonable energy of a ſingle man? Have we no ſuch man amongſt us? I am as ſure as I am of my being, that one vigorous mind without office, without ſituation, without public functions of any kind (at a time when the want of ſuch a thing is felt, as I am ſure it is) I ſay, one ſuch man, confiding in the aid of God, and full of juſt reliance in his own fortitude, vigour, enter-

prize

prize and perſeverance, would firſt draw to him ſome few like himſelf, and then that multitudes, hardly thought to be in exiſtence, would appear and troop about him.

If I ſaw this auſpicious beginning, baffled and fruſtrated as I am, yet on the very verge of a timely grave, abandoned abroad and deſolate at home, ſtripped of my boaſt, my hope, my conſolation, my helper, my counſellor and my guide, (you know in part what I have loſt, and would to God I could clear myſelf of all neglect and fault in that loſs) yet thus, even thus, I would rake up the fire under all the aſhes that oppreſs it. I am no longer patient of the public eye; nor am I of force to win my way and to juſtle and elbow in a crowd. But even in ſolitude, ſomething may be done for ſociety. The meditations of the cloſet have infected ſenates with a ſubtle frenzy, and inflamed armies with the brands of the furies. The cure might come from the ſame ſource with the diſtemper. I would add my part to thoſe who would animate the people (whoſe hearts are yet right) to new exertions in the old cauſe.

Novelty is not the only ſource of zeal. Why ſhould not a Maccabeus and his brethren ariſe to aſſert the honour of the ancient law, and to defend the temple of their forefathers, with as ardent a ſpirit, as can inſpire any innovator to deſtroy the monuments of the piety and the glory of antient ages? It is not a hazarded aſſertion, it is a great truth, that when once things are gone out of their ordinary courſe, it is by acts out of the ordinary courſe they can alone be re-eſtabliſhed. Republican ſpirit can only be combated by a ſpirit of the ſame nature: of the ſame nature, but informed with another principle and pointing to another end. I would perſuade a reſiſtance both to the corruption and to the reformation that prevails. It will not be the weaker, but much the ſtronger, for combating both together. A victory over real corruptions would enable us to baffle the ſpurious and pretended reformations. I would not wiſh to excite, or even to tolerate, that kind of evil ſpirit which evokes the powers of hell to rectify the diſorders of the earth. No! I would add my voice with better, and I truſt, more potent charms, to draw down juſtice and wiſdom and fortitude from heaven, for the correction of human vice,

and

and the recalling of human errour from the devious ways into which it has been betrayed. I would wiſh to call the impulſes of individuals at once to the aid and to the controul of authority. By this which I call the true republican ſpirit, paradoxical as it may appear, monarchies alone can be reſcued from the imbecillity of courts and the madneſs of the crowd. This republican ſpirit would not ſuffer men in high place to bring ruin on their country and on themſelves. It would reform, not by deſtroying, but by ſaving, the great, the rich and the powerful. Such a republican ſpirit, we perhaps fondly conceive to have animated the diſtinguiſhed heroes and patriots of old, who knew no mode of policy but religion and virtue. Theſe, they would have paramount to all conſtitutions; they would not ſuffer Monarchs or Senates or popular Aſſemblies, under pretences of dignity or authority, or freedom, to ſhake off thoſe moral riders which reaſon has appointed to govern every ſort of rude power. Theſe, in appearance loading them by their weight, do by that preſſure augment their eſſential force. The momentum is encreaſed by the extraneous weight. It is true in moral, as it is in mechanical ſcience. It is true, not only in the draught,

but in the race. Theſe riders of the great, in effect, hold the reins which guide them in their courſe, and wear the ſpur that ſtimulates them to the goals of honour and of ſafety. The great muſt ſubmit to the dominion of prudence and of virtue; or none will long ſubmit to the dominion of the great.

"*Dis te minorem quod geris imperas.*"

This is the feudal tenure which they cannot alter.

Indeed, my dear Sir, things are in a bad ſtate. I do not deny a good ſhare of diligence, a very great ſhare of ability, and much publick virtue to thoſe who direct our affairs. But they are encumbered, not aided, by their very inſtruments, and by all the apparatus of the ſtate. I think that our Miniſtry (though there are things againſt them, which neither you nor I can diſſemble, and which grieve to the heart) is by far the moſt honeſt and by far the wiſeſt ſyſtem of adminiſtration in Europe. Their fall would be no trivial calamity.

Not meaning to depreciate the Minority in Parliament, whoſe talents are alſo great, and

to

to whom I do not deny virtues, their ſyſtem ſeems to me to be fundamentally wrong. But whether wrong or right, they have not enough of coherence among themſelves, nor of eſtimation with the publick, nor of numbers. They cannot make up an adminiſtration. Nothing is more viſible. Many other things are againſt them, which I do not charge as faults, but reckon among national misfortunes. Extraordinary things muſt be done, or one of the parties cannot ſtand as a Miniſtry, nor the other even as an Oppoſition. They cannot change their ſituations, nor can any uſeful coalition be made between them. I do not ſee the mode of it, nor the way to it. This aſpect of things I do not contemplate with pleaſure.

I well know that every thing of the daring kind which I ſpeak of, is critical—But the times are critical. New things in a new world! I ſee no hopes in the common tracks. If men are not to be found who can be got to feel within them ſome impulſe

["—— *quod nequeo monſtrare, & ſentio tantum,*"

and which makes them impatient of the preſent; if none can be got to feel that private perſons may ſometimes aſſume that ſort of ma-

giſtracy which does not depend on the nomination of Kings, or the election of the people, but has an inherent and ſelf-exiſtent power which both would recogniſe; I ſee nothing in the world to hope.

If I ſaw ſuch a group beginning to cluſter, ſuch as they are, they ſhould have (all that I can give) my prayers and my advice. People talk of war, or cry for peace—have they to the bottom conſidered the queſtions either of war, or peace, upon the ſcale of the exiſting world? No. I fear they have not.

Why ſhould not you, yourſelf, be one of thoſe to enter your name in ſuch a liſt as I ſpeak of. You are young; you have great talents, you have a clear head, you have a natural, fluent and unforced elocution; your ideas are juſt, your ſentiments benevolent, open and enlarged—but this is too big for your modeſty. Oh! this modeſty in time and place is a charming virtue, and the grace of all other virtues. But it is ſometimes the worſt enemy they have. Let him, whoſe print I gave you the other day, be engraved in your memory! Had it pleaſed Providence to have

ſpread

ſpared him for the trying ſituations that ſeem to be coming on, notwithſtanding that he was ſometimes a little diſpirited by the diſpoſition which we thought ſhewn to depreſs him and ſet him aſide; yet he was always buoyed up again; and on one or two occaſions, he diſcovered what might be expected from the vigour and elevation of his mind, from his unconquerable fortitude, and from the extent of his reſources for every purpoſe of ſpeculation and of action. Remember him, my friend, who in the higheſt degree honoured and reſpected you, and remember that great parts are a great truſt. Remember too that miſtaken or miſapplied virtues, if they are not as pernicious as vice, fruſtrate at leaſt their own natural tendencies, and diſappoint the purpoſes of the great giver.

Adieu. My dreams are finiſhed.

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